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WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH AND HIS FRIENDS. VOL. II

W. Harrison Ainsworth.

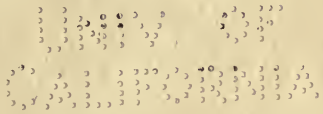
at the age of thirty-one;

from the portrait by D. Maclise, 1836.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH AND HIS FRIENDS

BY S. M. ELLIS

WITH 4 PHOTOGRAVURE PLATES
AND 52 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS
TWO VOLUMES—VOLUME II



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WILLIAM HARRISON

AINSWORTH

AND HIS FRIENDS. VOL. II

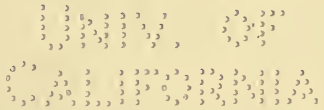
WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH AND HIS FRIENDS

CHAPTER XIV

"AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE" AND ITS CONTRIBUTORS: THE CONFLICT WITH "FATHER PROUT."

THE first number of *Ainsworth's Magazine* appeared in February, 1842, and the style of its Preliminary Address was amusingly reminiscent of the nonchalant — almost cheeky—notices penned by the same hand for *The Bœotian* and the other boyish productions of twenty years before:—

"... In introducing *Ainsworth's Magazine* to the public, he whose name it bears pledges himself only upon one point—that at the end of the many volumes yet unformed, to which he confidently anticipates his new venture will extend, nobody shall be able to convict him of breaking a single promise; for he does not intend to make one. ... The address, therefore, terminates with a phrase that usually serves for the commencement of a



prospectus :—' It is an excellent saying of the younger Pliny '—that *Ainsworth's Magazine* not only surpassed all its predecessors, but eclipsed all its contemporaries ! The younger Pliny, if he said so, was, we hope, a prophet."

But in the middle of his address he seems to have remembered that the new venture was not a boy's plaything, but a reality ; and that he had at length attained to what in his legal days he had thought more desirable than the Lord Chancellorship—the ownership of a magazine ! So he proceeded to enunciate the aims of *Ainsworth's Magazine* — Romance — Humorous Incident— Playful Satire—Notabilia of Travel—" Papers of bold and original inquiry into the great ends for which books were written—into books themselves . . . and into the mind, which they feed and fashion. It may treat of states and statesmen, though it will avoid politics and scandals. . . . It will investigate past events where it can, and show, too, how history has reported them. These are some among the more arduous of its tasks— the constant aim will be to execute them in a popular, and never in a rigid or pedantic spirit." [1]

The main attraction and principal feature of *Ainsworth's Magazine* was, of course, the owner's new romance, *The Miser's Daughter*, with Cruikshank's admirable illustrations, which commenced in the first number. It will, however, be more convenient to deal with this story in

[1] The first number contained an article on the Christening of the Prince of Wales (Edward VII), wherein it was suggested, anent the child, that in the years to come " England will have no cause to regret the days of her best Edwards." It was accompanied by two quaint woodcuts by George Cruikshank, one showing the infant riding on a whale—" The Prince of W(h)ales."

a separate chapter, and proceed now to note other writers and incidents associated with the Magazine.[1]

The opening volumes contained much excellent work. Thackeray helped to start his old Fraserian *confrère's* venture by contributing *Sultan Stork* by "Major Gahagan" and *An Exhibition Gossip* by "M. A. Titmarsh." G. P. R. James, Laman Blanchard, George Raymond, Charles Ollier, John Oxenford, Dudley and Louisa Costello, Mrs. Norton, T. Noon Talfourd, Robert Bell, and the editor's erudite cousin, W. Francis Ainsworth, were also among the original contributors. Here also appeared, in 1842, most of the earliest work of Shirley Brooks,[2] the famous *Punch* Editor, and of Dr. E. V. Kenealy,[3] a profound classical scholar and charming poet, who might have attained supreme success in Literature had he not abandoned the Study for the more combative atmosphere of the Law Courts. Dr. Kenealy's first paper in *Ainsworth's Magazine* was entitled *A Letter from Ned Hyde*, containing an imaginary lyrical translation by Chatterton from the Greek; he was then a young man of twenty-three, and sent the verses, as he states in his MS. *Autobiography*,[4] to Ainsworth when his name was entirely unknown to the editor. But the

[1] The advertisements in the early volumes of such contemporary works as *Harry Lorrequer*, *Charles O'Malley*, *Handy Andy*, and *Punch*, are of great interest in view of the success they attained later.

[2] His stories were signed "Charles W. Brooks." He was then twenty-six.

[3] Edward Vaughan Kenealy (1819–80), born at Cork, was called to the English bar in 1847. He became Q.C., and is now chiefly remembered as counsel for the Tichborne claimant, in 1873–4.

[4] I am indebted to Miss Henrietta Kenealy and Miss Arabella Kenealy for the privilege of inspecting and quoting from their father's most interesting MS. volumes of reminiscences and letters, which present a vivid picture of early Victorian literary history.

latter at once perceived the merit of the new writer, and Kenealy became a constant contributor to the Magazine. His special talent was for polyglot lyrics, and his amazing compositions, both in erudition and graceful diction, were fully equal to the famous work of the same description written by " Father Prout " and Maginn. And yet Kenealy soon after regarded his own literary gifts but lightly. Only three years later he wrote in his *Autobiography*, 1845 : " I entertain the same disrelish for literature and literary company that Pitt did—I was going to add Horace Walpole, but however he disliked authors, he was certainly vain of his writings. I have had as much fame as ever magazine writer had. . . . When *Brallaghan* [1] appeared it was fathered on Maginn by one set of newspapers, on Thackeray by another set . . . and all through Ireland it was attributed to Father Prout. Ainsworth used to lionize me at his parties. Well—what is it all ? Vanity of Vanities. Pleasant enough, but not worth the hate and envy it occasions. So says Edward Kenealy."

A curious example of a man's inability to estimate correctly his own talents and the calling in which he would have been most successful.

In striking contrast were the egotistical reflections of another contributor to *Ainsworth's Magazine*—Martin F. Tupper,[2] who considered himself an " immortal." Thackeray, when asked what the English people thought of

[1] *Brallaghan ; or the Deipnosophists*, 1845. This now rare book contains most of Kenealy's polyglot lyrics, and, also, graphic delineations of several of the Fraserians.

[2] Martin Farquhar Tupper (1810–89), a member of an old Huguenot family, was born in London, and educated at the Charterhouse and Oxford. His *Proverbial Philosophy* commenced in 1839 ; and in addition to prose, he wrote a great deal of mediocre verse.

Tupper, cuttingly said, "We do not think about him at all." And that is the final fate in a literary sense of Tupper to-day; yet, in 1842, the complacent author of *Proverbial Philosophy* was magnificently condescending, in his own opinion, when he deigned to write for *Ainsworth's Magazine*. In *My Life as an Author*, speaking of this same *Proverbial Philosophy*, Tupper proclaimed to the world:—

"Its second series was due to Harrison Ainsworth, at all events instrumentally. For just as he was establishing his special magazine, he asked me to help him with a contribution in the style of that then new popularity—my Proverbs. This I sturdily declined; for in my young days, it was thought ungentleman-like to write in magazines . . . even authorship for money was thought vulgar: but when there greeted me at home a parcel of well-bound books as a gift from the author, being all that were then extant of Ainsworth's, I was so taken aback by his kindly munificence that I somewhat penitentially responded thereto by an impromptu chapter on *Gifts*. . . ."

One cannot say much in praise of Ainsworth's method of bringing a coy contributor to heel. Presenting sets of his works seems a cumbrous and expensive sort of bait. However, *Jack Sheppard* and his brethren caused the haughty Tupper to capitulate; and, according to his own philosophy, he was converted from an enemy into a friend: "I had an open enemy;—I gave him gifts, and won him." (*Proverbial Philosophy* in *Ainsworth's Magazine*.) [1]

[1] Tupper's first paper in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, entitled *A Flight upon Flying*, is much more interesting in view of the present progress of aviation, for the writer imagines and pictures a flying man alighting on Dover cliffs in 1942.

Mr. Tupper laboured under the belief that his mission was a high one, for in a letter to Ainsworth, after further intimating the exceptional honour he was doing *him* by appearing within the vulgar pages of the magazine, he said, that as *Ainsworth's* was a " virgin . . . unpolluted by coarse details, and guileless of moral harm . . . I see no reason why my private efforts to do some little good thereby may not find aid from the publicity of your goodly magazine ; it is not unwise to mingle the jewels of religion even among the flowers of fancy and the fruits of literature ; for although some . . . may call it profanation, others may have reason to acknowledge the usefulness of truth's good seed being broad-cast everywhere." This was rather unkind to the other contributors. However, Mr. Tupper concluded by saying : " I feel that in writing thus sincerely I may have laid myself open to the black-looking charge of a vain and foolish egotism. Alas ! I mean far otherwise. I know myself too well for vanity. . . . I would gladly aid in raising the innocent laugh." In this capacity he was very successful, and accomplished his aim. We do laugh—at him.

The contributions in *Ainsworth's Magazine* signed " C. S." were the work of Mrs. Southey—better known as a poetess under her former name, Caroline Bowles. It was through Mrs. Hughes that Ainsworth secured this lady's verses, and there is frequent mention of them in the correspondence. " You know," Mrs. Hughes wrote to Mrs. Southey, " the interest I take in my friend Mr. Ainsworth and his three dear little girls, whom I love nearly as well as my own grandchildren. They are now residing with their father, who is toiling night and

day for the means of giving them every advantage of education, for while his mother lives he must depend entirely on his literary exertions; he is about to publish a Magazine in his own name, and is most anxious to obtain first-rate contributors, and most of all to obtain some contribution from you. . . . I should consider it one of the greatest favours you could possibly bestow." Mrs. Southey thereupon sent her poem, *The Three Sisters* —based on an extract from the journal of her husband, Robert Southey—for the first number of the Magazine, and in acknowledging it Mrs. Hughes said: "Mr. Ainsworth has just been with me so delighted, so grateful, so truly impressed with his obligations to you, that it did my heart good to see him so happy in the midst of all his heavy cares. . . ."

Mrs. Southey contributed many other poems for ensuing numbers of the Magazine, and Mrs. Hughes's letters are full of the editor's gratitude. Thus in June, 1842, she writes: "I have had the very great happiness of Mr. Ainsworth's company since Tuesday. . . . Much, dear Mrs. Southey, and often, have we spoken of you, and the kind readiness with which you have contributed such admirable aid to his undertaking, and which he is persuaded has *very greatly* tended to its prosperity. . . . I am happy to say the sale of the Magazine is great—7000. . . . We have talked of your lovely last poem (*The Landing of the Primrose*) over and over. . . . You have established a claim on his gratitude, and impressions of this kind are engraved on *steel* in a nature like his. . . . My dear guest must leave me to-morrow and resume his harness, but I trust he will—with all due attention to his interest (which must demand his going

on at railway speed at present)—liberate himself from the too great pressure and enjoy the literary leisure he is so highly qualified to enjoy. . . . We have had so much to speak about—we have walked and talked incessantly, and I flatter myself that the two days and a half of perfect leisure, change of air, and entire change of every kind, have been of service to him. . . . I wish he could allow himself to 'go to grass' more frequently in a place which I really think he feels as a second home. . . ."

Mrs. Hughes's only son, John Hughes, of Donnington Priory, the author of *The One Horse Chay* [1] and Editor of *The Boscobel Tracts*, was a frequent contributor to *Ainsworth's Magazine* under the same cognomen he used in *Blackwood's Magazine*—"Mr. Buller of Brazennose." As already related, Mrs. Hughes was a veritable storehouse of legend and anecdote, and, following the example of Barham, John Hughes converted several of his mother's stories into lyrical form. Of those he supplied to *Ainsworth's Magazine*, in 1842, *The Murder Prevented; or The Squire's Dream* was founded on actual fact—in the person of Archdeacon Proby, who lived in Leicestershire; and in *Charles Mathews Not "At Home,"* the victim of the actor's ventriloquial powers was Mr. Butterworth, the law-bookseller. Hughes's son, "*Tom Brown*" Hughes, made one of his earliest literary appearances in *Ainsworth's Magazine*—with his verses, *Milton and the Swedish Lord*—as a youth of nineteen. It was curious, though, that he chose Milton as his subject, for he had imbibed an early prejudice against that poet as the following amusing anecdote will show.

[1] This appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* about 1825, and must not be confused with Oliver Wendell Holmes's *The One Hoss Shay*.

Much as the literary proclivities of Mrs. Hughes were valued by Sir Walter Scott, Barham, and Ainsworth, it must be confessed that her grandchildren were not appreciative of her determination to instil within them an early knowledge of the classics. Thomas Hughes, when a small boy, had a guinea given him. This coin his grandmother took away, without his consent, and purchased for him a fine copy of Milton's poetry, saying *that* he would value when he grew up, whereas had *he* spent the money, he would only have wasted it on the transitory joys of marbles, tops, and toffee. Needless to say, the unfortunate boy did not see matters in this light; and so in after years Thomas Hughes wrote in his *Early Memories:* "I owe to my grandmother a dislike to Milton's poetry, which I doubt if I have ever quite got over."

This reminds one of a perfectly true incident of a small boy who, misunderstanding his mother's assurance that whatever was "lent to the Lord, repaid a thousandfold would be," placed a newly received shilling in the missionary-box in expectation of vast financial returns—delusive, golden dreams never, alas! realized: the law and the "profits" did not tally.

But to return to *Ainsworth's Magazine.* A frequent contributor to the early volumes was the unhappy Countess—or, as she preferred to style herself, Lady Harriette—D'Orsay. As related in a previous chapter, the Countess D'Orsay, unable to endure longer the state of affairs existing between her husband and her stepmother (Lady Blessington), left London for Paris, where she lived under the protection of the Duc D'Orleans (son of Louis Philippe). Despite her very delicate position,

she composed verses for *Ainsworth's Magazine* of such an obviously personal nature, that no one could fail to identify them with her own sad history. Thus, in *A Sketch*, she wrote under her name :—

> " Her's was a lonely and a mournful fate !
> . . . . . early desolate,
> Her life was mark'd with ruin. . . .
> It was a cloud of sorrow and of shame,
> And yet no guilt was hers ; none dared to blame
> That grieving woman as she walk'd alone,
> For others' sins still fated to atone.
> . . . some hideous scene of guilt had spread
> Its mem'ry round her brain, and darken'd all
> Her sunny youth with its mysterious pall.
> But e'en the harshest spirit could not dare
> To join one thought of *sin* with her *despair*."

It is very curious that both " Father Prout " and Dr. Kenealy should have suggested that these lines were written, not by the Countess D'Orsay, but by Ainsworth himself, to pique Lady Blessington on account of her refusal to contribute to the Magazine. This incredible supposition cannot be entertained for a moment. Ainsworth was always entirely free from resentment, and he would never have adopted such means to annoy a lady —and that one his friend, Lady Blessington—for such a petty reason. If Lady Blessington did decline to write for *Ainsworth's Magazine*—there is not a scrap of evidence on the subject—it was, no doubt, owing to the fact that her stepdaughter's effusions were appearing there, both in prose and verse. The Countess D'Orsay had a penchant for converting *all* her private affairs into sentiment and print for the benefit of the public and, presumably, her purse. Thus, directly after her " protector," the Duc D'Orleans, was killed in a carriage accident, she

contributed to *Ainsworth's Magazine* some very personal verses, entitled *She thought of Him—and Wept!* D'Orsay's young wife had been deeply injured, and her fate was one of the saddest; but her public parade of her griefs and wrongs—pandering to morbid curiosity—was wholly inexcusable and in strange taste.[1] And to this extent Ainsworth was also to blame—he ought to have declined the Countess D'Orsay's autobiographical versification; but, of course, such "Revelations of Society" fascinated the public, sold the Magazine—and that is *all* that could be said in extenuation!

Ainsworth wrote a good deal for his Magazine in addition to his serial romances therein. Most of the operatic and many of the literary reviews were from his pen. He also wrote the excellent article, *Strawberry Hill*, which was illustrated with woodcuts by Delamotte. Writing this appreciative account of Horace Walpole's fascinating retreat and the treasures in his collections was sympathetic work for Ainsworth; but, like all *virtuosi*, he deeply regretted the auctioneer's invasion of Twickenham's "Gothic Shrine" and the dispersal of its wonderful miniatures and countless other works of art. Ainsworth's article was reprinted from the Magazine and prefixed to the Sale Catalogue of the contents of Strawberry Hill, compiled by the great George Robins, whose flowery eloquence has never been excelled by any subsequent knight of the hammer. [The Strawberry

[1] Three weeks after D'Orsay's death, in 1852, his widow married the Hon. Spencer Cowper. She became very devout in her later years, wore semi-religious dress, and devoted herself to good works—in particular an orphanage (for children of soldiers who died during the Crimean War) which she established on her estate at Sandringham. Lady Harriette died in 1869, aged 56.

Hill sale lasted from 25th April to 21st May, 1842, and realized the sum of £33,468.]

Ainsworth's Magazine was all too small for the abundant material which, from the first, was seeking insertion. On 26th February, 1842, the editor wrote to Charles Ollier :—

"I forward you a copy of No. 2 of the Magazine. I think you will concur with me that it is a first-rate number. James's story [1] is excellent ; so is your own ; [2] and I hope *The Miser's Daughter* will not be found to have retrograded. Unfortunately, just at making up time, it was discovered that there were thirteen pages too much owing to the length of the *Strawberry Hill* paper and James, and I was obliged to cut and slash the poor *Miser's Daughter* and omit *two chapters.*"

The following extracts from letters to the author of the *Uncle Sam* sketches [3] will also give an idea of the plethora of contributions sent to the new magazine :—

"*January*, 1842.

"I have received your paper and like it very much.

[1] *The Fight of the Fiddlers.*

[2] *The Gravedigger*, concerning which in a previous letter Ainsworth wrote to Charles Ollier :—

"I have just read your tale for March, and like it exceedingly, especially the opening portion. It is so strongly and so naturally written, and the Gravedigger's revenge is so well conceived, that it would have done, I think, without the ghost. . . . However, it is excellent . . . as it stands and has interested me much, or I should not have written so much about it. It strikes me that you would succeed greatly in a sort of prose Crabbe-like stories. Your style is becoming simply strong and forcible. . . . I would suggest to you in your story for April or May to introduce a Gardener . . . it will enable you to describe gardens, etc., and to show off your knowledge of trees and flowers. . . ."

Ollier carried out this suggestion.

[3] This was probably Charles Hooten (1813–47), author of *Colin Clink*, who had led a wild life in Texas.

It is, however, too long for No. 1, for which I have many claimants. Will you oblige me with a short extract, about two pages and a half from *Uncle Sam*, accompanied by a brief letter of introduction, addressed to myself as Editor, from that worthy. I want to have a taste of you, if possible, in the first number, and I cannot otherwise manage it. Besides, I like your Yankee amazingly. . . . I think a few Yankee sketches would blend well with my other matter. I am so dreadfully pressed for space in the first number that I cannot, I regret to say, give you more than two or three pages. My limits are but scanty, and I am literally inundated with papers. . . .

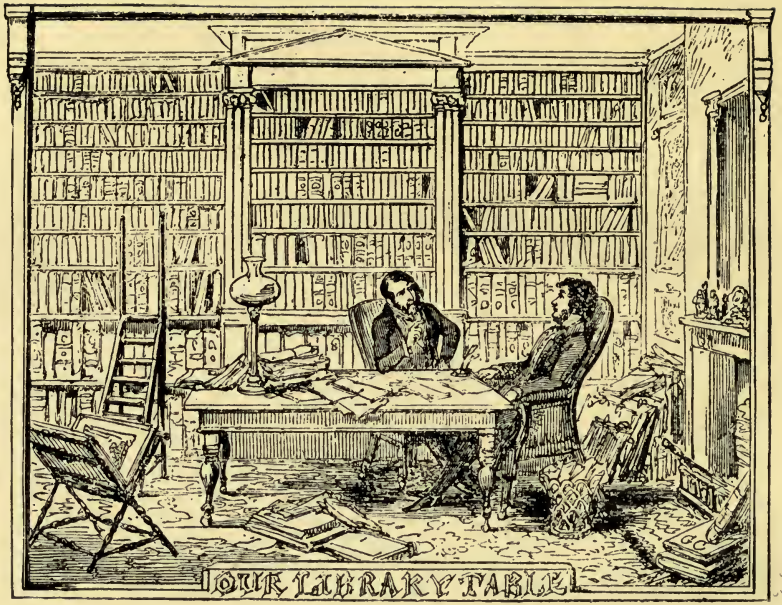
" I shall be happy to pay you at the rate of ten guineas a sheet. . . . Stick to the Yankees, for in these you are unrivalled, and in my opinion quite equal to your namesake *Sam Slick*."

This question of lack of space becoming acute, the size of the magazine was increased at the third number, when it also became necessary to raise the price from eighteenpence to two shillings. In its projector's own words, *Ainsworth's Magazine* was a " Literary enterprise vested in literary hands," and consequently—being ever careless over money matters—in his plans for romances and the literary and artistic features of the periodical, Ainsworth omitted to consider seriously the financial necessities of his venture, and to fix a price consonant with the value of the goods he put on the market. All his friends had told him his magazine was too low in price. Dickens wrote, " The old *Royal George* went down in consequence of having too much weight on one side. I trust the new First Rate won't be heavy anywhere. There seems to be too much whisker for the money " ; and Forster wrote, " Again I warn you, the Magazine is *too cheap*."

So the price was raised by sixpence, the circulation of the Magazine continued to increase notwithstanding, and the approval of the public and the press suffered no diminution.

There was a curious personal or familiar element in the early volumes of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, for the Editor conducted in his own holograph all correspondence with his numerous contributors; and he very naively—or egotistically—printed adulatory effusions concerning himself forwarded by wily scribblers. Thus we find acrostics on "William Harrison Ainsworth," and "Polyglot Verses addressed to the Editor," and "Sonnets to the Editor," in far too liberal profusion. A section of the Magazine was entitled "Our Library Table," and here Ainsworth printed letters he received from his more distinguished contributors, together with reviews of books and other matters, and a sort of friendly *causerie* with his readers. "Our Library Table" was headed by a delightful woodcut [1] by George Cruikshank, depicting himself and Ainsworth seated in the latter's book-lined library, at Kensal Manor House, discussing plans for the Magazine. The two portraits are admirable. "Our Library Table" very soon attracted the attentions of *Punch*, who produced an amusing burlesque.[2] Mr. and Mrs. Punch (with the baby) and Toby are engaged in family conclave at *their* table; and the accompanying text does not fail to satirize the superabundance of contributions seeking admission to *Ainsworth's Magazine*, the editor's habit of praising his illustrator, Cruikshank, and that artist's style of work.

[1] Reproduced opposite.
[2] *Punch*, Vol. II, p. 127.



AINSWORTH AND CRUIKSHANK (WITH HAND RAISED) IN CONSULTATION AT KENSAL MANOR HOUSE, 1842.

From the drawing by Cruikshank, in "Ainsworth's Magazine."

It was owing, of course, to Cruikshank that *Ainsworth's Magazine* was marred on its very first page by the most objectionable notice, entitled "*A few Words to the Public about Richard Bentley*, By Mr. George Cruikshank." As mentioned previously, Cruikshank had quarrelled with Bentley, and consequently the illustrations he had, by agreement, to supply for *The Miscellany* were grudgingly and badly executed. So, in the first number of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, Cruikshank issued this egotistical affirmation, in which he said :—

". . . Mr. Bentley, the publisher, evidently wishes to create the supposition that I illustrate his *Miscellany*. On the contrary, I wish the public to understand that I do no such thing. It is true that, according to a one-sided agreement (of which more may be heard hereafter), I supply a single etching per month. But I supply *only that single etching*. . . . Yet Mr. Bentley not only advertises me as the illustrator of his *Miscellany*, but he has lately shaped his advertisement thus, in the papers as well as on the wrapper of his magazine :—'Illustrated by Geo. Cruikshank, etc.'

[After some derogatory remarks about "Cruikshank the Younger"—his own nephew—he concluded :—]

"Persons who indulge in this sort of conduct imagine that they are very cunning—they are only very silly; and Mr. Bentley's actions show that there is something real in the joke let off at his expense, when he first projected his *Miscellany*. 'I advertised it,' said he, 'as *The Wits' Miscellany*,' but thinking it would be difficult to find wit enough every month, I withdrew the announcement, and resolved to call it *Bentley's Miscellany*,

instead.' 'Why, yes,' said a distinguished humorist, 'there was good reason why you should not call it *The Wits' Miscellany*, but why go to the *opposite extreme?*'"

All this was in execrable taste; and one can only suppose that Ainsworth was compelled to insert it as *sine qua non* to securing Cruikshank's invaluable aid as illustrator of his Magazine.[1]

Unfortunately, this concession to Cruikshank generated a far more painful battle of personalities, which involved Ainsworth and "Father Prout" as chief combatants. Bentley, thinking some "retort courteous" to Cruikshank's *Few Words* necessary, appointed "Father Prout" his champion, and the latter elected to address his remarks to Ainsworth in the form of "An humble Ballad," entitled *The Red-Breast of Aquitania*, which, of course, appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*. Now, it must be recalled that "Prout" had been deeply interested in Ainsworth's romance of *Crichton*, and he affected to be grieved at the author having fallen from that high standard of literature to become the chronicler of *Jack Sheppard*. Consequently, *The Red-Breast of Aquitania* was an allegorical picture of a bird who, soaring to heights where his powers could not sustain him, collapsed and fell—"nor uprose again"! Then, passing to personal reference to Ainsworth, "Father Prout" moralized:—

[1] It is pleasant to know that Cruikshank and Bentley were eventually reconciled. In 1864, the two met in St. James's Park, passed, looked round at each other, hesitated a moment, then mutually advanced with outstretched hands, saying, "Twenty years is long enough!" (*Cruikshank's Portraits of Himself*, by G. S. Layard.) After this, Cruikshank executed some new and admirable illustrations for Bentley's editions of *The Ingoldsby Legends*.

But I mused alone,
For I thought of one
Whom I well had known
In my earlier days,
Of a gentle mind,
Of a soul refined,
Of deserts designed
For the Palm of Praise.

. . . .

Easy task for him
In his flight of Fame,
Was the SKYWARD PATH,
O'er the billow's wrath,
That for GENIUS hath
Ever been the same.

And I saw him soar
From the morning shore,
While his fresh wings bore
Him athwart the tide,
Soon with powers unspent
As he forward went,
His wings he had bent
On the sought-for side.

But while thus he flew,
Lo! a vision new [1]
Caught his wayward view
With a semblance fair,
And that new-found wooer
Could, alas! allure
From his pathway sure,
The bright child of air.

For he turned aside,
And adown the tide
For a brief hour plied
His yet unspent force,
And to gain that goal
Gave the powers of soul,
Which, unwasted, whole
Had achieved his course.

[1] *Jack Sheppard*, of course.

A bright SPIRIT, young,
Unwept, unsung,
Sank thus among
  The drifts of the stream ;
Not a record left,—
Of renown bereft,
By thy cruel theft,
  O DELUSIVE DREAM !

L'ENVOY

To W. H. AINSWORTH, ESQ.

Whilome, Author of the Admirable *Crichton.*
Subsequent Chronicler of *Jack Sheppard.*

Thus sadly I thought
As that bird unsought
The remembrance brought
  Of thy bright day ;
And I penned full soon
This DIRGE, while the moon
On the broad GARONNE
  Shed her wintry ray.

There was nothing very objectionable in this effusion : indeed, the personal references to Ainsworth—" soul refined," " genius," " bright spirit," etc.—were very complimentary. But for some reason Ainsworth's allies were greatly annoyed ; and so in the Magazine for April, 1842, in " Our Library Table," " Mr. Buller of Brazennose " (John Hughes) took up the cudgels thus :—

" Dear Ainsworth,—I see Father Prout has dedicated a piece of lachrymose ornithology to you, in the metre, and on the subject, of

' Who kill'd Cock Robin ? '

It would be hard if your own correspondents were want-

ing in similar attentions to your most serene Editorship. . . . Accept, therefore, the following anecdote. . . . I cannot compete with the learned Padre either in pathos or in Scripture mottoes. . . .

" Yours ever,
" T. R. BULLER."

There followed a very clever parody of the Jesuit's *Red-Breast of Aquitania* entitled *The Magpie of Marwood*, to which Hughes prefixed the Spanish proverb, " *Dios me guarde de mis amigos.*" In this " humble ballade," the Magpie (" Prout "), having enticed two friendly birds (Ainsworth and Cruikshank) to his garden, induces his master (Bentley) to shoot them :—

Bang went my gun !
That favourite one,
With chattering fun,
  Laugh'd out amain ;
And hopp'd down quick,
The brains to pick
Of his recent clique
  Of comrades twain.

. . . .

Our MAG has a touch
Of the JESUITS, such
As I heard of so much
  In foreign parts.
I once heard say
That in MARY'S day
When they had their way,
  They'd even dare
To burn and roast
Folks at a post ;
  —That they hate you most
  When they speak you fair.

To John Hughes's verses Ainsworth himself added :—

L'ENVOI.

To the man of rhyme
Train'd in far clime,
Whose gifts sublime
His soul exalt
Above the respect
Which the Turks (blind sect !)
Are apt to connect
With bread and salt.

Father Prout, incited by ye scurvie bookesellerre Dickon, abuseth, in drivellinge rhymes, his olde friend, at whose boarde, in bygone dayes, he hathe often caroused jollilie. A warninge to alle men how they put faithe in JESUITES.

To the Bibliopole,
Blind as a mole,
Who fee'd, poor soul !
The sarcastic Père
For his sly attack
On the very " JACK "
Which he sold, good lack !
As his choicest ware.

" W. H. A."

Dickon, ye scurvie booksellerre, having filled his coffers with ye profits of " JACK SHEPPARD," baselie hireth Father Prout to abuse itte in his Miscellanie (derisivelie styled ye Wits') wherein he once glorified itte. A warninge to all future Editors of, and writers in, ye sd. Wits', or (" *to go to ye opposite extreme* ") BENTLEY'S MISCELLANIE.

Immediately following this was a sonnet :—

" TO THE EDITOR.

Within yon sunless cage, through many a year,
The Imperial bird hath droop'd ;—all hope foregone
Of his free mountain-home, of growing dawn,
And full meridian, in its confine drear :

. . . . . .

But Thou, more bold of purpose, trampling on
The poor restraints, which lowlier men, for gain,
For quiet, or for safety's sake, abide,
Off from thine eagle spirit hast dash'd aside,
Lightly as Samson's withe, the unworthy chain,—
AINSWORTH—I joy to see thee now sustain
Thy self-borne course !—*thou art dis-Bentleyfied !* "

All this, of course, induced a declaration of war to the knife, and proved literally to be the torch that fired the magazine. There could be no retreat now, and " Father Prout " and Bentley laid their plans for a dire attack—and revenge. In the interval, Ainsworth informed the readers of his Magazine (May, 1842) that he had heard " Father Prout " was " smarting under his castigation of last month, and meditates a rejoinder. . . . Our real offence in the Padre's eyes was not the production of *Jack Sheppard*—in the silly hue and cry against which he ought to have been the last to join—but because we ventured to say we preferred Mr. Buller's polyglot verses to similar effusions of his own. At all events, this is the motive he assigns for his conduct, but we suspect it lies a little deeper. We were not, however, alone in the opinion. The public agreed with us. We will also back his countryman, Ned Hyde [Dr. Kenealy], against him for scholarship. . . ."

And Hughes wrote to Ainsworth: " The Padre is breathing vengeance, but I agree with you, it is best to content ourselves with one tarring and feathering, since our friends agree that the plumage sticks on appropriately; and to let him peck away without further molestation."

All London was interested in the progress of this literary combat. At the dinner given to Charles Dickens, at Greenwich, after his return from America, Tom Hood noted:—

" Ainsworth and Prout being at paper war six men were put between them including a clergyman. Ainsworth's health was proposed, and a Manchester friend of his sang a Manchester ditty, so full of trading stuff, that

it really seemed to have been not composed but manufactured."

The idea of keeping Ainsworth and "Prout" at a safe distance from each other is distinctly amusing. There could have been no risk of physical violence, for Ainsworth was tall and robust, but the Jesuit small and fragile. Though personal revenge was impossible, "Father Prout" was, indeed, "breathing vengeance," and the form it took was soon apparent. In *Bentley's Miscellany* [1] appeared a most virulent and vile attack on Ainsworth (it is curious how Cruikshank and Bentley, the originators of the fray, had dropped out of the affair) in ribald doggerel, utterly unworthy of Mahony's scholarly pen, entitled :—

THE CRUEL MURDER OF OLD FATHER PROUT BY A BARBER'S APPRENTICE.

A Legend of Modern Latherature : By Mr. DULLER of PEWTERNOSE.

It is too lengthy to quote here in full, but the following is the curdled cream of this venomous satire :—

"Oh ! list unto a tale of blood, high-seasoned and well-peppered,
Not from the *Book of Barabbas*, nor a leaf out of *Jack Sheppard*,
Where all we see is butcherie, of vulgar folks—and Grammar,
With deep impressions left behind—of a crow-bar and sledge-hammer ;
But when each eye hath read *our* tale, each ear hath heard *our* dirge, a man
Must be indeed hard-hearted not to weep for an old clergyman,
Who met in town a flashy lad from Manchester called BILLY,[2]
To whom he taught his alphabet—for he was raw and silly,—

[1] Vol. XI, p. 467. [2] Ainsworth.

Till, finding him too loath to learn, nor very *compos mentis*,
The old man thought him fittest for a hair-dresser's apprentice ;
So he bound him to a Barber ; [1] but impatient of all censures,
He bolted through the window soon,—he broke thro' his indentures ;
Then set a shop up for himself out on the road to Harrow,
Where finally he harrowed up our soul, and froze our marrow,
By doing of a bloody deed, whereby, he, *par ma Barbe*, is
In a pretty way to be declared a " winner of the *Darbies*."
In Burlington,[2] much honoured, tho' he bears his honours gently,
There lives a famous Barber, whom the public know as Bentley.

. . . . . .

To this good man this witless youth, who had of grace few particles,
Was articled in proper form (I ne'er could *read* his articles !) ;
His duties were to sweep the shop, to ope and close the shutters,
To look after the knocker, and the scraper, and the gutters ;
To set in order brush and comb, or sponge, in the back-room, or he
Might decorate his own love-locks with ' the governor's' perfumery.
When not engaged whetting razor-blades, and other scrapers,
He'd scribble tales of NEWGATE, which were used as curling-papers ;
And not content with writing tales (which served for papillotes) he
To fancy-prints a liking took, not quite like Bartolozzi ;
For all his curling flimsies would, if looked into, exhibit
A jail, a den of pick-pockets, a pot-house, or a gibbet ;
And tho' such ' *illustrations* ' were, at best, but rude and scratchy,
His GUIDO was a *Guy* of straw,[3] the Cruikshanks his CARACCI ;
Yet, many of the customers, who only came for shaving,
Would take a peep at what he scrawled, for the sake of the engraving.
'Twas true, this lad from Manchester, of jokes had few, if any,
Yet at twisting ' *tales* ' he was a sort of story-spinning-jenny;

[1] Bentley.
[2] New Burlington Street, where Bentley's shop was.
[3] *Guy Fawkes.*

But, as the tongues of giddy youth too much indulgence loosens,
His ' *stories,*' which came thick and thick, at last became a nuisance.
The shop frequenters often wished he'd hold his peace or alter
The staple of his tedious yarns, all ending in a halter.
Soon, one by one they dropped away—for life cannot afford us
Sufficient time with maudlin tales of cut-throats to be bored thus ;
A listener by the button still he sometimes on the sly attacked,
Till, finding that each new ' *Romaunce,*' like the reading of the Riot Act,
Cleared out all decent customers, his master told him plainly
That ' 'twere better for the nonce eschew a practice so ungainly,'
That ' men of sense and learning loathed an over-dose of folly.'
Brief answer to his master made the varmint, ' *Nix my dolly !* '
This could not last. ' The governor,' good man, could not prohibit him,
So *he* was soon ' *disbentleyfied,*' to bore the town *ad libitum*

. . . . . .

Meantime, the lad, ' *disbentleyfied,*' sought out some new employer ;
But hairdressers all shook their heads at this FIGARO top-sawyer.
A leech, who physics no one but *himself,* is out of humour ;
So looked our Sheppard when reduced to be his own perfumer ;
But, vowing vengeance upon all of his own trade and caste, he
Resolved to *keep* a BARBER'S shop, however ' cheap and nasty.'
Hand-bills he sent out, full of spleen and venom,[1] interlarding
Lots of self-praise with ' *Shaving done by me for twopence farden !* '
He raved in BARBAROSSA'S vein,—he quitted town in BLUEBARBES,
And fix'd his *shop* contiguous fo a grave-yard in the suburbs,
Not far off from a parish Green (I think they call it KENSAL'S) ;
And thither he brought out his frizzling irons and utensils.

. . . . . .

[1] An allusion to the original cause of the trouble—Cruikshank's *Few Words . . . about Richard Bentley.*

He bought a cask of ' *half and half*,'—laid in a stock of liquors,
And began to keep a ' tap ' for penny-a-liners and bill-stickers.

. . . . . .

Meantime, the cockneys, with amaze, saw bill-stickers placarding
The palisades with ' AINSWORTH'S EASY SHAVE FOR TWOPENCE FARDEN.
TRY THE NEW SHAVING SHOP ! ' [1] was scrawled from Camberwell to Holborn.
A touch of art beyond the skill of BENTLEY, TAIT, or COLBURN.

. . . . . .

' Hand-bills ' you got, ' advertisements ' you met where'er you turn, all
Belauding ' AINSWORTH'S EASY SHAVE ! ' in town and country journal,
And as a genuine barber's block might fascinate the eyes o' men,
He furnished all the window shops with *his* portrait as a specimen,
Till merry folks laugh'd out, at a scale of puffing so extensive,
And some admired his modesty, and some thought it *expensive*.
Where was old Father PROUT ? alas ! far off beyond Mount Cenis,
Or, on the Danube or the Rhone, at Athens or at Venice ;
And, while his boy bad counsel took from GRANT, the penny-a-liner,
The *Père*, who might have guided him, was away in Asia Minor.
Yet, when he heard, last March, of all his latherary frolics,
Of his funny Cruikshank *georgics*, and his Kensal Green *bucolics*,
Much fearing that his former ward would take leave of his senses,
Or do himself some injury—besides the said *expenses*,—
The shrewd old man, from Gascony, where he was then, one morning
Took up his pen, and privately dispatched to him this warning.

. . . . . .

[1] This refers, of course, to the advertisements of *Ainsworth's Magazine*.

' Keep your temper besides, or beware of the IDES,
And of perils *periodical*,
Keep your fingers aloof from the bellows of " PUFF,"
And of *self-praise* be less prodigal.'

. . . . . .

From Eastern climes old PROUT came home. Our Figaro (the Vandal)
Saw not the sacred dust of Greece adhering to his sandal ;
All that the barber's-boy could see was that his chin was hairy,
And that a customer had come for his shave-shop latherary.
He sought with many a wheedling hint of former days to coax him,
Visions of ' *easy shaving soap* ' he conjured up to hoax him ;
But PROUT, who had misgivings of the ' gentle Sheppard's ' razor,
Calmly deferred doffing his beard till BENTLEY came, or FRASER,
For he had read his several tales of severing bone and muscle,
(So had the late Courvoisier, who killed Lord William Russell).
Hence, in reply to all he urged,—'twas all that passed between 'em,
The Father, puffing his *chibouk*, said ' *Quære peregrinum.*'[1]
Back to his shop suburban went the barber ; but a dark chasm
Yawned in his gloomy soul, created by that gentle sarcasm.
Dissembling well his wrath—the sequel showed he ne'er forgot it,—
He laid his plan to murder PROUT by cutting the ' *carotid.*'
But first he swore his gratitude in many a long epistle,
For many a valued service done,—he swore it on the missal.
These letters are on record,[2] and make out the case exactly,
Nor left a doubt, when they ' came out,' in the inquest held by Wakley.

[1] " Prout " translated this, " Look out for a greenhorn ! " He intended to suggest in the above passage that Ainsworth had endeavoured to secure contributions from him for the Magazine, but that he (" Prout ") preferred to reserve his work for *Bentley's Miscellany* or *Fraser's Magazine*.

[2] At this point, " Prout " was despicable enough to print, in a footnote, extracts from private letters from Ainsworth, of years before, asking for literary help and favourable notices *re Rookwood* and *Crichton*. The Jesuit took care, however, to quote the complimentary references to himself, wherein Ainsworth compared him to Sterne and extolled the " halo " of his reviewing powers.

A smooth cajoling *billet-doux* (his inward feelings swallowing)
He forwarded to the old man after the tenor following :—
' Thrice welcome, honoured Father, from the land of Pipe and Turban !
What say you to pot-luck here at my domicile suburban ?
Here you will meet one BULLER, fresh from Brazennose a gownsman,
And, if you list, I'll ask MACLISE, your celebrated townsman.'
Old PROUT, who from his childhood with delight had met the latter,
Would with MACLISE take bread and cheese, e'en from a barber's platter.
So forth he went to AINSWORTH'S tent in confidence, nor thought a man
Could treat his guest in other guise than a single-minded Ottoman.
No painter came that day,—an absence Prout thought of the oddest, he
Met only him of BRAZEN NOSE, and him of brazen modesty ;
Yet, nothing loth, he sat with both, draining the tankard's fulness,
Till, lulled to soft oblivion by their joint-stock powers of dulness,
Gladly the ' gentle Sheppard ' seized the wished-for opportunity
To wreak his plan on the old man, and *burke* him with impunity.
On his own hearth his hospitable carving-knife he whetted,
While BULLER, hight of BRAZENNOSE, both aided and abetted.
To cut my story short, he, with his trencher-man and fugleler,
Remorseless, cut the old man's throat—the *trachea* and the *jugular !*

. . . . . .

' LATEST PARTICULARS.'

Non-apprehension of the criminals !

Up to the latest hour of post we've only time to mention
That the two murderers, dull rogues ! are hard of apprehension.
Indeed, the whole account itself seems very doubtful, very,
For *we* have seen PROUT yesterday—he was ALIVE and merry.
And if to tickle such small fry the old man thinks his pains worth
We trust to have another laugh at BRAZENNOSE and AINSWORTH."

All this was indeed out-poping Pope in his most venomous mood; but, unlike the clean, razor-like strokes with which the Bard of Twickenham cut up Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "Prout's" butchery of Ainsworth was a clumsy, *dirty* operation in which the wounds were inflicted with a jagged saw. The Jesuit's satire was heavy, his malignant humour difficult to perceive, his very meaning often obscure. The violence and ferocity of his attack seem—to us, who cannot get at the underlying motives—wholly out of proportion to the original cause of quarrel. Undoubtedly no thrust of Ainsworth's went home more surely than that in which he reminded "Prout" of how he had constantly sat at the hospitable board of Kensal Lodge in the old days. "Prout" knew he could make no defence for his forgetfulness of past favours (some years earlier his daily dinners had been provided by his friends Ainsworth, Sheehan, and Lady Blessington, in turn), and all he could attempt was a "*tu quoque*" retort, in which he originated the fable, already alluded to, that Ainsworth had written the verses signed by the Countess D'Orsay in his Magazine:—

"This gentleman, who talks so sentimentally of 'bread and salt,' puts into the mouth of Lady Harriette D'Orsay certain significant lines, which no one believes were ever written by *her*. . . . Has he forgotten that he was fed at the table of Lady Blessington? not, surely, for the sake of companionship? for a duller dog never sat at a convivial board. . . ."

A dull dog? And yet but a few weeks before—in the same place[1]—"Prout" had written of this same dull

[1] *Bentley's Miscellany* (Vol. XI, pp. 144–7.)

dog as " A bright SPIRIT," whose " powers of soul," and possession

> " Of a gentle mind
> Of a soul refined,
> Of deserts designed
> For the Palm of Praise,"

had provided him (" Prout ") with

> " An acquaintancy,
> Which we deemed, I count
> Of more high amount,
> For it oped the fount
> Of sweet sympathy."

Truly the wily Jesuit—for all his craft—had but a short memory!

Ainsworth and John Hughes attempted no retort to *The Cruel Murder of old Father Prout*—indeed, none was possible. They could not, even if they had wished, have capped such cruel and venomous stuff. The thing was beneath contempt, and the honours of war rested, of course, with Ainsworth, for, in public opinion, " Prout " had placed himself beyond the pale by his perfidious use of his former friend's private letters. The only further allusion to this painful affair in *Ainsworth's Magazine* was contained in a notice of a poem entitled *The Praise of Porter*, in *Bentley's Miscellany* for October, which, it was pointed out, had previously been published in *The Monthly Magazine*—" The only difference between the two versions of the poem is, that *Bentley's* is decidedly inferior to the other, from certain alterations which have been made in it . . . while the long and stupid notes attached to it, would seem to emanate from the Jesuit scribe who publishes his friend's private letters, and who can perhaps explain how the verses

came to be palmed off as original on the stolid bookseller."

The Cruel Murder of old Father Prout was not included in Mahony's published *Reliques;* but his editor, Charles Kent, alluded to it—as a "revolting gibe . . . hurled, apparently in a moment of aberration, by Prout, like some chance missile picked up in the kennel, at the comely head of one of his contemporaries who, until then, had, as freely and as frankly as any true gentleman could, interchanged with him the grip of the right hand of friendship. . . . Those were times among literary belligerents for the flinging of vitriol, and the wielding of bludgeons."

Charles Kent was mistaken in his conclusions, for, as William Bates correctly pointed out: "It was in no 'moment of aberration,' but in *malice prepense*, that he 'hurled the gibe' at the head of his former host; it was no 'chance missile picked up in the kennel,' but one that bore a mark, like a backwoodsman's bullet, to indicate whence it came. Nothing could be more characteristic of the man and his temper." [1]

How different was Ainsworth's temper: hot for a moment, and unflinching when attacked, but forgiving and wholly destitute of malice. In spite of "Prout's" vile doggerel, and viler footnotes, his public insults, and printing of confidential letters, Ainsworth forgave him, and nearly forty years after could write of him in the following generous terms:—

"*February 24th*, 1880.

"My dear Charles Kent,

". . . I always regret the misunderstanding that occurred between myself and Mahony, but any offence

[1] *The Maclise Portrait Gallery*, 1898, p. 476.

that was given him on my part was unintentional, and I cannot help thinking he was incited to the attack he made upon me by Bentley. Be this as it may, I have long ceased to think about it, and now only dwell upon the agreeable parts of his character. He was an admirable scholar, a wit, a charming poet, and generally—not always—a very genial companion. . . . I should like very much to see a new edition of his works. Carefully edited it must be popular. Latterly I have been suffering from a severe attack of neuralgia, and this makes the writing even of a letter irksome and painful to me.

"With kindest remembrances, Believe me, my dear friend,

"Always yours,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

Truly a character of singular amiability and charm.

CHAPTER XV

KENSAL MANOR HOUSE AND ITS SOCIETY. AINSWORTH AND THACKERAY.

" In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality ;
His great fires up the chimney roared ;
The stranger feasted at his board."

EARLY in 1841 Ainsworth's " bachelor " life at Kensal Lodge came to an end. Desiring to make a home with an adequate establishment for his three daughters, hitherto at school, and with an ever-increasing circle of friends, he found it necessary to move into larger quarters.

Adjoining Kensal Lodge was a large bungalow building, erected early in the nineteenth century by Thomas Harrison (who was not related to Ainsworth), proprietor of the Tavistock Hotel, Covent Garden. Mr. Harrison named his country domicile Kensal Manor House, from the fact that it stood on part of the manorial lands of Willesden.

This was the property acquired by Ainsworth, who moved into his new home in March, 1841.[1] He greatly improved the house, added another story, and made it a commodious residence in every way suitable for the large entertainments he desired to give. The principal apartment was, of course, the dining-room—destined to be

[1] He retained, at the same time, a portion of Kensal Lodge, where Mrs. Touchet continued to reside.

KENSAL MANOR HOUSE, WITH KENSAL LODGE BEYOND, FROM THE HARROW ROAD.
AINSWORTH OCCUPIED THE MANOR HOUSE, 1841-53.
Photographed by Mr. Thankfull Sturdee.

the scene of many memorable dinners—a spacious room at the back of the house, with three windows leading into the garden, and overlooking a charming rural prospect. Adjoining was the drawing-room, which opened into a large loggia in the Italian style, and also communicated by folding doors with Ainsworth's library—the room on the right-hand side when entering from the Harrow Road. That on the left was the Miss Ainsworths' sitting-room. There was a pleasant lawn at the back of the house, with a paddock beyond ; and a series of fruit and flower-gardens extended for some distance to the west. Kensal Manor House was thus admirably suited for both garden and indoor parties.

Here, at last, Ainsworth found full scope for exercising his hospitable aspirations ; his greatest pleasure in life was to gather his friends around him, and being an ideal host and admirable conversationalist, his house became the most popular and celebrated *rendezvous* of literary and artistic society in the fourth decade of the last century. "At Kensal Manor House, hospitality is a virtue that is always at home," wrote Laman Blanchard, summing up in a few words the presiding spirit of the pleasant residence on the Harrow Road, which was Ainsworth's home for twelve years.

As soon as he was settled in his new abode, to initiate the *symposia* of the Manor House in fitting style, he gave a large house-warming dinner, and here is Dickens's acceptance to the festivity :—

"DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,

"MY DEAR AINSWORTH, "*April 29th*, 1841.

"With all imaginable pleasure. I quite look forward to the day. It is an age since we met, and it ought

not to be. The artist has just sent home your *Nickleby*. He suggested variety, pleading his fancy and genius. As an artful binder must have his way, I put the best face on the matter, and gave him his. I will bring it together with the *Pickwick* to your housewarming with me. . . .

" Faithfully yours always,

" CHARLES DICKENS." [1]

Kensal Manor House, as previously described, stood in the midst of charming country, but within easy distance of London; consequently, every writer of note, many artists, and other distinguished people assembled and met here. There are numerous contemporary references to these famous reunions, and without exception the guests retained to the end of life the pleasantest recollections of the hospitality and informality, combined with culture and brilliant talk, which they enjoyed at Ainsworth's house. " We are sure," said James Crossley, " there are no reminiscences that dwell more agreeably on our minds than of the days when Kensal Manor House, on the Harrow Road, where Mr. Ainsworth resided for many years, was a central point for literary men; and when, after sitting under an admirable host and enjoying the conversation of men whom it was always a delight to meet, the guests were serenaded on those fine summer evenings as they went homewards by the nightingales which had not then deserted that part of the suburbs of London."

Of course, Ainsworth's old circle of friends, who had

[1] Unfortunately, Ainsworth's letters to Dickens have been destroyed. Miss Hogarth tells me that a year before her brother-in-law's death he made a bonfire in the meadow at the back of Gadshill, and burnt all the letters he had received from his friends. Dickens wished to prevent his correspondence being published after his death.

formed the smaller coterie of his "bachelor" entertainments at Kensal Lodge, were in constant attendance at the Manor House, and in addition to these—who comprised, among others, it will be remembered, Dickens, Forster, Thackeray, Blanchard, Jerdan, Talfourd, Barham, Bulwer-Lytton, "Phiz," Maclise, Cruikshank, Lover, and several of the Fraserian staff—came Charles Lever, Captain Marryat, G. P. R. James, Douglas Jerrold, W. H. G. Kingston, Dr. Kenealy, Shirley Brooks, Edwin Landseer, Martin F. Tupper, Thomas Wright, Lord Albert Conyngham, Robert Bell, Dudley Costello, Charles Hervey, W. Francis Ainsworth, Macready, and many other notable people with whom Ainsworth was on intimate terms. But the dinner-parties were no longer confined to men, for the host's three daughters were now growing up, and many ladies came to participate in the social doings at the Manor House. Thus, Charles Dickens was accompanied by his wife and the latter's young sister, Miss Georgina Hogarth. In the drive out to Kensal from Devonshire Terrace, the Dickens party generally included their intimate friends, Forster and Maclise. Miss Hogarth, who is the last survivor of the Kensal Manor House circle, has very kindly favoured me with her reminiscences of the entertainments there as follows:—

"The parties at Mr. Ainsworth's hospitable house are among the most pleasant remembrances of my girlhood. The guests were generally all the best known people in literature and art, and the evenings were most social and informal. They were always dinner-parties—succeeded by games and music, and very often winding up with a dance, in which the three young daughters joined. Mr.

Ainsworth was a most kind friend of mine, and I was very fond of his three daughters. Mr. Dickens and Mr. Ainsworth were greatly attached to each other, and on most intimate terms."

Dickens was a great help at these informal parties; thus, at one festive season, in inviting the Pettigrews[1] to dinner, Ainsworth wrote: "We are to have a Twelfth Night Cake, and Dickens has promised to bring his conjuring apparatus with him."

Dickens must have been delightful as an amateur conjurer, with his wealth of humour and patter *à la* Weller and Mrs. Gamp. The two following characteristic "Boz" letters may fittingly find a place here, as they both relate to the convivialities of Ainsworth's house:—

"DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,

"*October 13th*, 1843.

"MY DEAR AINSWORTH,

"I want very much to see you, not having had that old pleasure for a long time. I am at this moment deaf in the ears, hoarse in the throat, red in the nose, green in the gills, damp in the eyes, twitchy in the joints, and fractious in the temper from a most intolerable and oppressive cold, caught the other day, I suspect, at Liverpool, where I got exceedingly wet; but I will make prodigious efforts to get the better of it to-night by resorting to all conceivable remedies, and if I succeed so as to be only negatively disgusting to-morrow, I will joyfully present myself at six and bring my womankind along with me.

"Cordially yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

[1] Dr. J. Pettigrew was surgeon to the Duchess of Kent, Librarian to the Duke of Sussex, and a great authority on mummies.

" DEVONSHIRE TERRACE.

" MY DEAR AINSWORTH,

" Will you tell me where that Punch is to be bought, what one is to ask for, and what the cost is. It has made me very uneasy in my mind. Mind—I deny the beer. It is very excellent; but that it surpasses that weaker and gentler, and brighter, ale of mine (oh! how bright it is!) I never will admit. My gauntlet lies upon the cask.

" Yours in defiance,

" CHARLES DICKENS."

Ainsworth kept open house out at Kensal Green; his friends were always welcome, and they often invited themselves, knowing well the pleasant dinner and genial society that awaited them at the end of their country ride. Thus, Forster writes to Ainsworth :—

" Will you give me pot luck to-day at the Manor House? It is such delicious weather, and an engagement I have to dine with Fox vanishes in that blaze of sunshine which welcomes this brilliant notion. Say 'yes'—if you have no overpowering claim upon you—say 'yes'—and expect on the utterance of the word to see

" Your affectionate

" JOHN FORSTER."

And Laman Blanchard would write :—

" My dear Ainsworth, I CANNOT be left out, and have therefore apologised myself out of a particular engagement in order to join you. But I know my reward! Twelfth Cake! Psha! ALE! I find Dickens is particularly pleased. . . .

" I am delighted with the prospect, and hope to see you all on Thursday revelling in that field, and imbibing bliss per that Hodgson's pale."

And on another occasion he says :—

" You must not give me up. Think what *real* impediments they must be to keep from your table one who, in all weathers, has sought it, and found there pleasure upon pleasure a hundred times over. . . .

" Ever yours,
" L. B."

Dr. Kenealy, in his MS. *Autobiography*, makes frequent mention of the festivities at Kensal Manor House. He relates :—

" The first time I dined with Ainsworth we had among the company (it was a literary one) Dance and Brookes of the *Argus*, Bell (author of *Lives of the Poets*), and some other chaps of Helicon. Laman Blanchard sat next to me. . . .

" We had a very good dinner. . . . There was a great deal of claret which was good, and a great deal of talk which was not so good. We all got merry. . . .

" Ainsworth's is a pretty box of a house. . . . He is a jolly, handsome-faced fellow, with a profusion of whiskers."

And again, a little later on, Kenealy, after quoting Ainsworth's letter of invitation to dine, on 20th December, 1842—" to meet a quiet and non-literary party. You may play the tea-totaller if you please, or the claret-bibber if you prefer it "—notes : " This was a very pleasant dinner. The company was mixed. There were Ainsworth's three daughters, his aunt,[1] three or four girls, Dr. Pettigrew, who talked a great deal about

[1] An allusion to Mrs. Touchet, who was not, however, Ainsworth's aunt, but a cousin by marriage.

mummies, Colburn, the bookseller, and his wife. I believe Laman Blanchard and Bell were also there. None of the literary squad of the Magazine. We had an immense quantity of fun, dancing, claret, and chit-chat. I was treated quite like a lion. We had a Yule-log burning gloriously, and a mistletoe bough suspended over every door." And writing to Ainsworth a year later, Kenealy said: "I shall not fail at the coming festive season to remember the delightful party we had at your place this time twelve months, nor Mrs. Touchet's charming conversation, nor your own unstudied but exquisite good nature, which like sunshine warms all who approach you, and to drink your health (if I shall be sufficiently recovered) in a silver jug of claret."

Curiously enough, another prominent counsel in the Tichborne Case, Mr. Serjeant Ballantine, also recorded his reminiscences of a dinner at Kensal Manor House. He wrote in his *Experiences*:—

". . . The time is early summer, the hour about eight o'clock in the evening; dinner has been removed from the prettily decorated table, and the early fruits tempt the guests, to the number of twelve or so, who are grouped around it. At the head there sits a gentleman no longer in his first youth, but still strikingly handsome; there is something artistic about his dress, and there may be a little affectation in his manners, but even this may in some people be a not unpleasing element. He was our host, William Harrison Ainsworth, and, whatever may have been the claims of others, and in whatever circles they might move, no one was more genial, no one more popular. . . . Opposite to me at the dinner-table . . . sat a good-looking young fellow, a member of the same

profession as myself, got up with infinite care. He was seated next to a venerable lady, rattling and shining with diamonds ; these two were engaged in the innocent occupation of cracking bon-bons and reading the mottoes. Harrison Ainsworth, pointing my attention to him, said, ' He (naming him) will make his way in the world.' The prophecy has turned out correct."

Nicholas Michell, a contemporary miscellaneous writer, who had the privilege of attending a dinner at Kensal Manor House at which both Dickens and Thackeray were present—at the time when the two stars were keen rivals for pre-eminence in the literary firmament—noted that Ainsworth was, " of course, the life and soul of the party ; while he spoke much, and was the cause of merriment in others, his own face did not often relax in mirth. Yet he appeared to touch subjects lightly and to glance over the surface of things, while his rival Thackeray talked with a deeper purpose. Thackeray in his movements was always awkward, tall, gaunt, with nose flattened almost to his face ; but though his features were remarkably plain, the expression was highly intellectual and spoke of good nature and amiability. Dickens was then a thin, wiry man. Forster did not converse much, but laughed heartily at Dickens's witticisms."

It was very unusual for Forster to be silent. These records of Ainsworth as a host could be extended, and they all bear witness to the fact that he had the best qualification of a leader of conversation—he never let it flag ; in addition to his own fund of animated anecdote and brilliant comment, he drew out his guests, by skilfully chosen questions and tactful remarks, and caused

KENSAL MANOR HOUSE. GARDEN FRONT.
From a view kindly sent by Mr. Charles Biddiscombe.

them to converse on those particular subjects with which each was best adapted to deal.

The pretty garden of the Manor House was very popular in summer with the host's friends—delighted to escape from the torrid confinement of their London rooms. There is a fine old oak in this garden, and in Ainsworth's time a rustic seat was placed around the trunk. This was the favourite spot; and here, seated under the shade of the great tree, the most famous writers of that period met and discussed their literary plans. After dinner, too, on warm nights, the guests would bring out their wine and return to the old seat under the oak—to be lulled by the distant song of the nightingales and the perfume of a thousand flowers.

Thackeray, in particular, was very fond of the horticultural amenities of Kensal Manor House. He was at that period living in lodgings—first at 13, Great Coram Street, and later at 88, St. James's Street—and used to walk out to Kensal, generally on Sundays. He would then enjoy sitting in the garden; and after an early four o'clock dinner would often accompany Ainsworth and his young daughters over the fields to evening service at Willesden Church. This was a delightful walk through rich pasturage and wooded meadows—fresh with the scent of hawthorn or new-mown hay—to the little rural fane, of which Ainsworth said, in *Jack Sheppard*, "Willesden is the most beautiful country church we know." [1] Here the party from Kensal Manor House would occupy one of the old-fashioned square pews near the pulpit, and the simple service concluded, the walk

[1] Ainsworth was churchwarden at Willesden, and a member of the Committee for restoring the old church, in 1850. Dr. Knapp was the Vicar in his time.

home would be through fields flooded with the crimson glory of the setting sun. Sunsets across the green expanses of Middlesex are truly beautiful, and exquisite indeed is the spire and tree-crowned eminence of Harrow Hill in relief to the glowing evening sky. One is tempted to picture, in this charming setting, the leonine figure of Thackeray, hand-in-hand with the small ladies in the quaint early Victorian dresses.

Thackeray was devoted to Ainsworth's three little motherless girls, and the recent calamity which had deprived his own children of their mother's love and care increased the bond of affection and sympathy between him and his young friends at Kensal Green. [In connection with Thackeray's pleasant Sundays with the Ainsworths, I may add Lady Ritchie stated to me: "I can quite imagine how glad my father must have been to be with kind people, and to join in their family life. He always loved children and peaceful home doings."]

Most of Thackeray's letters to Ainsworth contain a reference to the latter's daughters. Thus, he wrote, from 13, Young Street :—

"I was sorry not to find you at home yesterday, when I came to see those pretty young ladies once more if I could; and to tell you how it was the Mulligan didn't come to your ball.[1] . . . Not being a dancing, or even a supping, man now, the loss of the good things doesn't very much affect me, but I should have liked to have

[1] Thackeray mistook the date, and only discovered the blunder when dining with Mrs. Talfourd on the same night as the ball. The latter entertainment was given at Kensal Manor House to celebrate the coming out of Miss Blanche Ainsworth—the youngest daughter—about 1847.

shaken hands with old friends to whom I beg to be very truly remembered.

" Yours, dear Ainsworth, truly,

" W. M. THACKERAY."

And another characteristic little note is worded :—

" 88, ST. JAMES'S STREET.

" MY DEAR AINSWORTH,

" I would have come with the greatest pleasure, but Gwilt has engaged me. How are you and the ladies and the young daughter ? I will come out one very early day to shake you by the hand. . . . Will you give me your name at the G.[1] for Tuesday at 6, and come and dine with me there ? I want to ask 3 or 4 of the littery purfession.

" Yrs. always,

" W. M. T."

Ainsworth's three daughters were growing up into very pretty and charming girls. Mrs. Hughes wrote of them to Mrs. Southey : " Three such specimens of purity, singleness of heart, simplicity, and strong affection I never yet saw . . . they have all quick understandings, but are diffident beyond description, and so *very* lovely in person. . . . Nature has given them a grace and elegance which cannot be taught. . . . Their father gives them every moment of his time which he can steal from his overwhelming toil—he really looks like their elder brother, and his attention to them on every point is really very delightful to see."

The attractions of the Miss Ainsworths were even noted in print. In *The Pictorial Times* for 20th July, 1844, there was a good sketch of their father by C. Martin ;

[1] Garrick Club.

and the artist's brother-in-law, Hugh Cunningham, the publisher, contributed the accompanying letterpress, in the course of which he wrote: "Our friend Harrison Ainsworth is a widower, with, we are told, three charming daughters, and a charming house on the road to Harrow. We are too rough to go through the softer civilities of life, and too grey-headed to make any impression on the hearts of pretty girls, or else we should be off for the Harrow Road to-morrow, and perhaps—but we will not hazard a conjecture."

Captain Marryat, like Thackeray, took a warm interest in Ainsworth's daughters. So also did Wordsworth, and on one occasion when the Lake Poet was visiting Kensal Manor House he came into the young ladies' schoolroom, and was greatly interested in all that they were doing, asking many questions concerning their studies and pursuits.

Mrs. Hughes, of course, often came to stay at Kensal Manor House. She writes to Ainsworth with reference to one of her visits:—

"I promised to let you know when I was a free agent, and I can truly say there is no use I could so pleasantly make of my wings as to direct them to Kensal, and to you and yours, but I fear I gain my freedom too late! I know that you must, if you adhere to the plans of Auld Lang Syne, begin to be wholly occupied with writing. I could come on Monday next. . . . I have so many kind friends asking me to come to them, that I begin to think the society of old women is like port wine—the better for keeping. I must request you to make me acquainted with Mr. Dickens: no one knows better than yourself the reason that I did *not* care for it; but *now* I wish it most particularly. . . ."

And on another occasion :—

" I will name Monday for the pleasure of waiting on you, because my son desired me to make no engagement for him till his visit to you was secured. On Sunday, Walter [1] is to be with us to meet his father and accompany him to the Duke of Sussex, and he must return to Woolwich in the evening. . . .

" I am much surprised at what you tell me of Miss Mitford. She has a pension from government, and I cannot conceive how any one of a high spirit can submit to receive alms when the means of *existence* is within their power. She is, however, a very good person I believe, and was the most devoted of daughters to the filthy old satyr—her late father. (I assure you no other name applies so well to his character.) She suffered him to spend on his vices a handsome independence which was her right, and was amiably blind to all his gross and disgusting failings.[2] I will transmit your kind subscription to my son, and will follow your good example. . . .

" Ever your affectionate

" M. A. HUGHES."

As it was always Ainsworth's custom to conduct the correspondence concerning his magazines personally, many strangers found their way to the ample, well-stored table at Kensal Green ; for, after a few pieces from a new writer had been accepted, an invitation to dine with the editor invariably followed. In this manner originated Ainsworth's friendships with Dr. Kenealy, Shirley Brooks,

[1] Mrs. Hughes's fourth grandson, who entered the army. He was Sir Walter Scott's godson.

[2] Mary Russell Mitford (1786–1855), whose *Our Village* first appeared in *The Lady's Magazine*, 1819, was the daughter of George Mitford, M.D. The latter, in addition to his daughter's inheritance, squandered his own fortune, his wife's settlements, and a lottery of £20,000, of which the lucky number had been chosen by his daughter, Mary, when ten years old.

Charles Mackay, and Charles Hervey, among many others. The last named, Hervey, records:[1] "It was in the spring of 1842 that I first saw William Harrison Ainsworth at Kensal Manor House, the pretty residence then occupied by him on the Harrow Road. I had previously exchanged letters with him respecting a paper or two written for the new magazine he had just started, and on my arrival in town received a cordial invitation to dine with him. He was then a strikingly handsome man and . . . held a prominent place among the popular authors of the day. . . . On the occasion alluded to, the guests, with the exception of the host's own family, were exclusively literary. . . ."

Ainsworth, as a true *gourmet*, was very particular in preserving strict punctuality at the supreme function of mankind—DINNER; and, according to Hazlitt, his outer door was locked at the psychical moment appointed for serving, and no belated guest admitted. However, it is to be hoped the latter clause of this draconic law was more honoured in the breach than in the observance—at any rate in the case of Forster, who was always and constitutionally late for an appointment. Wrote Ainsworth to Dickens: "Don't forget your engagement to dine with me on Tuesday next. I shall send a refresher to Forster, the unpunctual." One cannot dwell for a moment upon the terrible idea of "The Arbitrary Gent" standing shut out—like the Peri at the Gate of Paradise—on the doorstep of Kensal Manor House, while through the fast-closed portal permeated the savoury odours of the banquet and the sounds of revelry and popping corks within.

But the hospitality of the Manor House was not con-

[1] *Longman's Magazine*, April, 1885.

fined to the dining-room, and many humbler visitors received good cheer in the kitchen. A characteristic example of Ainsworth's kindness of heart was related by a man named Perry, who as a boy was employed by the printer who executed the author's work. The lad had to take proofs out to Kensal Manor House, and during his long waits was regaled with unaccustomed luxuries in the servants' hall—oyster patties making a special impression on his memory. Upon one occasion, it was so late when Ainsworth had finished working at his proofs that he was unwilling for the printer's boy to take the long and lonely walk back to London, and insisted on giving him a bed for the night. The lad, who eventually was killed in the American Civil War, never forgot, and always boasted of, the night he was the guest of the author of *Jack Sheppard*. Many such incidents might be related; and though fifty-seven years have sped since Ainsworth left Kensal Green, there are still persons living in the district—changed though it is from country to town—who recall to memory the genial, generous master of the Manor House and his three pretty daughters.

Bricks and mortar last longer than flesh and blood, and Kensal Manor House still stands, though the famous people who met there in the long ago have nearly all gone down to the grave. It is a place of many memories. Silent now, its hospitable fires long since extinguished, the kindly host and his merry circle of friends will never meet there again: nevertheless

> "We cannot go from where we dwell
> And leave behind no lingering trace;
> Where in the past our shadows fell,
> A shadow of us haunts the place."

CHAPTER XVI

"THE MISER'S DAUGHTER." "WINDSOR CASTLE."
"MODERN CHIVALRY." "SAINT JAMES'S."

THE MISER'S DAUGHTER, as previously stated, formed the principal feature of the opening volumes of *Ainsworth's Magazine*. As the story neared its serial completion there, at the end of 1842, it was published in three volumes by Cunningham and Mortimer, and was dedicated in these words: "To my Three Dear Daughters, Fanny, Emily-Mary, and Blanche, I offer this Tale. W. H. A., Kensal Manor House. 15th Oct., 1842." [1]

The Miser's Daughter is a picturesque costume-romance of eighteenth-century life and manners, combined with the exposition of the "folly and wickedness of accumulating wealth for no other purpose than to hoard it up, and to exhibit the utter misery of a being who should thus voluntarily surrender himself to the dominion of Mammon." The moral the author wished to point was—to continue the use of his own words—"All high and generous feelings, all good principles, and even natural affection itself will become blunted, and in the end completely destroyed, by the inordinate and all-engrossing passion for gain. . . . The sin carries its own punishment with it; and is made the means of chastising the

[1] The first edition is scarce, and has a market value of about £8.

sinner. Dead to every feeling except that of adding to his store, the miser becomes incapable of enjoyment except such as is afforded by the contemplation of his useless treasure. . . . Distrust of all around him darkens his declining days . . . until at length, while haunted by vague terrors, and despairingly clinging to his hoards, they are snatched from his grasp by the ruthless hand of death."

" Other and lighter portions of the tale "—Ainsworth continued[1]—" refer to the adventures of a young man on his first introduction to town-life about the middle of the last century, when Ranelagh was in its zenith, and Vauxhall and Marylebone Gardens in vogue ; when the Thames boasted its Folly, and when coffee-houses filled the places of clubs. The descriptions I believe to be tolerably accurate, and they are at all events carefully done, with the view of giving a correct idea of the manners, habits, and pursuits of our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers.

" It was part of my original scheme to describe the secret proceedings of the Jacobites in Lancashire and Cheshire, prior to the Rebellion of Forty-five, with Prince Charles's entrance into Manchester in that memorable year, and the subsequent march to Derby.[2] But I found these details incompatible with my main plan, and was therefore obliged to relinquish them ; contenting myself with a slight sketch of a conspiracy in London hatched by certain adherents of the young Chevalier. Cordwell Firebras is no fictitious personage.

" The incident of the payment of the mortgage-money

[1] In a MS. statement to Blanchard Jerrold, when the latter was writing his *Life of George Cruikshank*.

[2] Ainsworth did this later on in *The Manchester Rebels*.

is founded on fact. A similar occurrence took place about the period in question, and the paymaster was a proud Welsh baronet (of Denbighshire), as described, with a pedigree as old as the hills. The particulars were related to me by my excellent friend, Mrs. Hughes, to whom I am indebted for many valuable suggestions."

The Hughes family supplied Ainsworth with one of his characters for this book. " Do you not like the last chapters of *The Miser's Daughter?* " Mrs. Hughes wrote to Mrs. Southey: " How graphically the discovery of the Jacobites is given, and how well contrasted all the characters are ; one—Sir Norfolk Salusbury—is a perfect picture of a first cousin of my husband's, who never spoke but in such inflated language ; and Mr. Ainsworth, from a slight sketch given him by my son's early recollections of his eccentric cousin, has made an inveterate likeness."

All the characterization in *The Miser's Daughter* is good, from the Miser himself and the determined, plotting Cordwell Firebras, to the stolid serving-man, Jacob Post, and his inquisitive neighbours in the Little Sanctuary. Westminster, of course, is where most of the scenes of the story take place.

Cruikshank again gave of his best in the fine illustrations he executed for *The Miser's Daughter.*[1] Excellent is the animation displayed in " Sir Bulkley Price bringing the mortgage money," and charming the drawing of the old houses, with their lattice-windows and signs, in this plate. And the same remarks apply to " Randulph de-

[1] Cruikshank finished his designs for this romance in water-colours. He but rarely executed work of this description. The original sketches are beautifully reproduced in Mr. Joseph Grego's *Cruikshank's Water Colours*, 1903.

fending himself against Philip," with its glimpse of old Whitcomb Street. Best of all is "The Jacobite Club pursued by the guard," which is extraordinarily realistic —the figures fighting and clambering over the roof—the terrified spectators, aroused from sleep, gazing from their lattice-windows at the fray—while the exquisite moonlight effects on the tiled roofs, with the twin towers of Westminster Abbey in shadow, render it an artistic gem. The illustrations, too, of the eighteenth-century entertainments at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and Marylebone Gardens possess singular merit. That entitled "The Masquerade in Ranelagh Gardens" was a skilful adaptation of Bowles's contemporary print of the same subject. The three charming little woodcuts which Cruikshank furnished for *The Miser's Daughter*, in addition to the twenty etchings on steel, only appeared in *Ainsworth's Magazine;* they were not included in the illustrated editions of the book.

Like most of Ainsworth's best romances, *The Miser's Daughter* was dramatized. Edward Stirling's version was produced at the Adelphi in October, 1842, and in the following month T. P. Taylor brought out another at the City of London Theatre. *Hilda*, adapted by Andrew Halliday from this book, and produced at the Adelphi in 1872, had unfortunate consequences, as will be seen subsequently.

It is pleasant to record that *The Miser's Daughter* was warmly appreciated by John Forster, who, by highly praising it, did his best to obliterate memories of his unfortunate behaviour in the matter of *Jack Sheppard.* An allusion to *The Miser's Daughter* in the following letter to Ainsworth will serve as an excuse for intro-

ducing another example of Forster's quaintly original epistolary style:—

"58, Lincoln's Inn Fields,
"*January 27th*, 1842.

"I send this line to catch you in your breathing time. It has come for this month at any rate—has it not? . . . If you're at the office now, bend your steps this way in leaving it, and look in for a few moments upon me. The housekeeper will let you in at all times. Or if you *knock at the door*—not ring—I will let you in myself. I am obliged to resort to precautions just now—being in agonies of book conception, though not expecting delivery these months to come. I like the notion of your story. Come and tell me about it—and about your magazine. And let us have a chop together as soon as you can. . . . Your story begins well—but we will discuss to-morrow. . . .

"Ever thine as anciently,
"John Forster."

And later, Forster wrote to Ainsworth:—

"You are . . . a promise breaker and a fugitive. It is too bad. Why don't you come? We shall never be, in military parlance, 'as we was,' at this rate. . . .

"Come and dine with me at 5 o'clock. I will take you to see a *wonderful actress* and most fascinating woman (with whom your unhappy friend is over head and ears in love)."

Following his usual plan at this period, Ainsworth had more than one iron in the literary fire, and so his next romance, *Windsor Castle*, was composed more or less contemporaneously with *The Miser's Daughter*. It was a very unwise proceeding, for, combined with the heavy

labour of conducting his Magazine, the two stories inevitably suffered, and good as they both are, signs of haste and lack of carefully thought out construction are evident, particularly in *Windsor Castle*. He was at this time literally working day and night—the Magazine alone would have been sufficient occupation for most men—and all the author's friends regretted the too intense strain he was putting upon his powers, but their remonstrances were in vain. As Mrs. Hughes told Mrs. Southey: "Were I an absolute monarch I should for the love I bear him put him in handcuffs, or any confinement which would prevent his writing more than for a limited time every day; his present double undertaking appears to me as an act of deliberate suicide, and cannot be accomplished without injury to mind and body, besides the minor consideration that the works must suffer by such undue haste in composition: but he is deaf to the voice of a friend 'charm she never so wisely,' so I can only hope I am not a Cassandra."

It was originally intended to issue *Windsor Castle* in monthly parts, and the first number was advertised to appear on 29th March, 1842. But a sad event caused the frustration of this plan, for on 15th March Ainsworth suffered the great bereavement of his mother's death.

Mrs. Ainsworth had been in ill-health for some time, and in the autumn previous to her death she was removed from Prestwich to Bannister's Farm, Kensal Green, to be near her son; but, despite every attention, she died, to the great grief of Harrison Ainsworth—"a better, a kinder woman never lived," he wrote.[1] *Windsor*

[1] Mrs. Ann Ainsworth died at the age of 64, and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery.

Castle was, of course, deferred. These events were the cause of the following exquisitely expressed letter from John Forster :—

" How deeply I sympathize with the sorrow you are suffering—I hope I need not say. This is the grief that of all others, in this world of grief and losses, falls heaviest on a true-hearted man. So much of all one's life is in it —so many of those thoughts of life's beginning which last beyond all others. But you have many consolations, my dear friend, and not the least that you have attended your poor mother to the close, and that she died with your love beside her. Is there anything I can do for you ? Is there anything I can write for you ? I imagine that you will defer the *Windsor Castle* this month—but should you not do so, I might be of some assistance to you. I have all my Henry VIII books here, and if you told me some particular thing you wanted—it may be horrible conceit—but somehow I think I might be of some beggarly service to you. At all events, in that or lesser matters, try if for old affection's sake you can discover anything for me to do for you. . . . I will go to you at any time you wish. Forgive my naming such a thing now, but it is from the fear you may think me careless in the matter of your magazine.

" Ever, my dear Ainsworth,

" Your affectionate friend,

" JOHN FORSTER."

Eventually Ainsworth decided to let *Windsor Castle* make its first appearance in the pages of his Magazine : the price of the latter was increased by sixpence, and consequently the public obtained the new romance at half the price it would have been necessary to pay had the work been issued in separate parts. The extra sixpence for the Magazine enabled Ainsworth to introduce

larger type and effect other improvements in the periodical. *Windsor Castle* commenced in the number for July, 1842 (whilst *The Miser's Daughter* was still running serially), and concluded in that for June, 1843. The first four illustrations on steel were executed by the famous French artist, Tony Johannot; but on the completion of *The Miser's Daughter*, Cruikshank's brain and pencil being at liberty, that great artist designed the fourteen plates which followed. And magnificent designs they were. Cruikshank reverted to the Rembrandtesque style he had displayed in his work for *The Tower of London*, and some of the *Windsor Castle* plates are fully equal to those in the former book—particularly the weird pictures which deal with Herne the Hunter. Astonishing is the lurid power exhibited in "Herne plunging into the Lake"; "Herne appearing to Henry on the Terrace"—with its wonderful rendering of lightning; "The Disappearance of Herne in the Curfew Tower"; "Herne flying into the Burning Woods"; and "The Signal"—with its distant view of Windsor Castle beyond the trees, and clever smoke and sky effects.

In addition to Johannot's and Cruikshank's plates, *Windsor Castle* was illustrated by eighty-seven quaint and remarkable woodcuts, and three plans, by W. Alfred Delamotte, who pictured most successfully the sylvan forest scenes and architectural features of the Castle described in the book. Delamotte made his sketches from the originals under the direction of Ainsworth, as the latter required the designs in succession, to illustrate the various phases of his romance. Thus, author would write to artist: "I shall be glad to see you to a family

dinner at half-past three o'clock to-morrow—Sunday. Bring your sketch-books with you, and be here in the middle of the day. . . . Remind Mr. Costello, when you see him, to get the order from Lady Mary Fox for her apartments at Windsor. You had better go down to Hampton Court and sketch Will Sommers, and some of the other figures in the old pictures of Henry the Eight's time, carefully."

The first edition of *Windsor Castle*, in book form, was issued by Henry Colburn, in 1843, in three volumes, with three of Cruikshank's plates as frontispieces, but no other illustrations. It was soon followed, in the same year, by the one volume edition, containing all the illustrations by Cruikshank, Tony Johannot, and Alfred Delamotte, which had originally appeared in *Ainsworth's Magazine;* and, shortly after, the story was issued in eleven monthly numbers, with all the illustrations. *Windsor Castle*, translated into French, appeared daily as a feuilleton in *Le Messager;* and a drama founded on the book, and entitled *Herne the Hunter*, was produced at the London theatres.

Windsor Castle was thus a great success; and it is still very popular. This is not to be wondered at, for, despite some faults in construction, it is one of Ainsworth's most fascinating works. Herein the author again interpreted the "atmosphere" of a building, and conveyed to his readers the subtle influence and charm emanating from Windsor's historic castle. More powerfully still did he interpret the mystery of trees in this romance; and in the forest scenery—the sylvan glades—the haunted dells—the tree-shadowed lake of the Great Park at Windsor—Ainsworth found a perfect stage for the presentment of

his elfin fantasies. Most skilfully, too, he adapted and revivified for the purposes of his woodland romance the ancient and weirdly picturesque legend of Herne the Hunter, a tradition which, originally dating from the time of Richard II, had been preserved in a few graphic words by Shakspere :—

> " There is an old tale goes, that Herne the hunter,
> Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
> Doth all the winter time, at still midnight,
> Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns ;
> And there he blasts the tree . . . and shakes a chain
> In a most hideous and dreadful manner :
> You have heard of such a spirit ; and well you know,
> The superstitious idle-headed eld
> Received, and did deliver to our age,
> This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth."
>
> (*Merry Wives of Windsor.* Act IV, Scene 4.)

This was just the sort of wild legend that had an irresistible appeal to Ainsworth ; and what he made of the spectral huntsman is familiar to all readers of *Windsor Castle.*

[The " haunted oak " tree associated with Herne the Hunter was still in existence in Ainsworth's time. It stood by the footpath leading across the Park to Datchet. The ancient tree was blown down in 1863, but a young oak was planted by Queen Victoria to mark the spot where it was situated, and she caused her wood-carver to execute a bust of Shakspere from a piece of the old oak. The bust was placed in the Library at Windsor Castle, where is also preserved a spray of oak leaves, with the inscription in faded writing—" A leaf from Herne's Oak " ; this latter relic was found in a copy of the second Shakspere folio which belonged to Charles I,

carefully placed next the passage relating to Herne in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.]

Windsor Castle is one of the best examples of Ainsworth's skill in combining a vivid and exciting narrative with wealth of historical detail and scenic description, the whole interwoven with supernatural events in the most natural manner, so much so that it is difficult to say where the mundane ends and the occult begins. It was an art quite peculiar to this author, who, by the force and interest of his narrative, compels the reader to accept his supernatural beings and improbable events as a necessary and essential part of the dramatic work in hand.

The characters in *Windsor Castle* are, of course, nearly all historical—from the King to his jester, Will Sommers. The delineation of Henry VIII is very powerful, and Ainsworth succeeded in presenting a striking picture of the rugged majesty, violence, cruelty, and strength, which in turn characterized the most interesting, perhaps, of England's monarchs.

In addition to its popular success, *Windsor Castle* brought Ainsworth many congratulations from his personal friends, and nothing ever pleased him more than appreciation of his work from cultured readers. For example, he wrote to Dr. Kenealy :—

" I was exceedingly busy at the time your last gratifying note reached me, or I should have instantly acknowledged it and thanked you for the enthusiastic praise you are pleased to bestow on *Windsor Castle*. Enthusiastic as your praise is, and undeserved as I feel it to be, it is not the less pleasant, because it satisfies me that I have won an admirer amongst a class of writers whose

opinion is in itself an earnest of celebrity—and as such I accept it."

Throughout 1842, Mrs. Southey, from Greta Hall, Keswick, sent frequent contributions to *Ainsworth's Magazine*, Mrs. Hughes continuing to be the medium by which the poems were received. Consequently, the letters that passed between the two ladies contain many references to Ainsworth, the amount of work he was doing at this period, and the successful progress of his new magazine. Mrs. Hughes writes, at different times :—[1]

"My poor friend after long struggles with adversity is now raising his head, I hope, above the waves which have nearly overwhelmed him . . . could you see him with his three lovely girls, acting both as father and mother, blending strictness with indulgence so admirably that though they fear they almost idolize him, you would be cheered in spirit to think you have aided him. . . .

"I am very anxious he should marry, for he is too young to remain single . . . he is now in a position as to fortune, and has such singular advantages of person and talents that he cannot be induced to marry merely for mercenary motives, though entitled to chuse among the fair and the wealthy. . . .

"Probably, had he foreseen the event of his poor mother's death, he would not have engaged in the toil and worry of the Magazine, but at present he is pledged too deeply to the public to relinquish it, and if it continues to sell as at present, it would be folly to throw aside such a source of income. . . .

"I almost fear to ask for intelligence from Keswick. Your last account closes the hope I had (faint though it

[1] I am indebted to Mr. Herbert Salusbury Hughes, of Offley Place, for the extracts—here and elsewhere in this work—from his great-grandmother's correspondence with Mrs. Southey.

was).[1] Yet, is it *quite* impossible to make the trial of Buckland? During Sir Walter Scott's last illness, when his faculties appeared wholly to have failed at Florence, his physician recommended his return by the Tyrol, believing that a sight of the mountains (reminding him of his dear and native hills) might revive the spark; and Mrs. Lockhart told me it did so, and but for the last fatal paralytic seizure, this good effect might have lasted. . . ."

Mrs. Southey wrote to Mrs. Hughes:—

"Think of Mr. Ainsworth's good nature! Asking me if he shall try to get me a wee doggie. . . . I suspect Mr. Ainsworth might be the man to *buy* if he could not beg for me one of those canine bijoux, and that would seriously vex me, and take away all the pleasure I have in his kind acceptance of the *very trifles indeed* I have contributed to his Magazine. I am sure he does not need any such now—by the address to the contributors in the last No. he seems overwhelmed with supply, with *l'embarras des richesses*. . . . I was right glad to see he had raised his price to 2/-. Better make the advance now than later—all reasonable people will acknowledge the expediency. . . . The thing must be considered whether the time and talents of the highly gifted editor might not be put out to better interest—not perhaps in a lucrative sense, but in achieving a *lasting* reputation. What a mass of talent—of more than talent—runs to waste in the ephemeral literature of the day! for ephemeral must be the greater portion of the periodical supply, though some like *The Miser's Daughter* and Warren's clever stories will be recollected and survive. Then—I whisper it in your ear only—I don't like to see the honourable in bad company, and Magazines like Poverty 'make a man acquainted with strange bed-

[1] Robert Southey was dying; the end came in 1843.

fellows ' : but that may be only one of my peculiar crotchets. The name of one of his lady contributors is associated with sad interest for herself, and indignant abhorrence of those whose youthful victim she was—I mean the much injured Countess D'Orsay. . . . I want to know whether it is possible for you to agree with Mr. Ainsworth about Sir L. Bulwer. I consider him the most mischievous writer of his class—the most insidiously misleading. I am glad his clever, fascinating works did not come forth in the days of my youth. Did you ever hear of his starring it at Brussels in white satin Pantaloons ? "

Mrs. Hughes in reply said :—

" I go every length with you as to Sir Lytton Bulwer, who, talented as he is, has a taint in all the works of his which I ever read that has prevented me from looking into all of them. *Night and Morning*, however, I did read at Mr. Ainsworth's recommendation and was extremely pleased with it. I did not discover any of the evil tendency which I so much disliked in his previous works. . . . I somehow fancy Mr. Ainsworth did *not* write that critique,[1] however answerable as editor for the opinion, it is not his style ; but not agreeing in the opinion given (except as to *Night and Morning*) I did not interrupt the perfect harmony of my visit by a cavil. I passed three very happy days with Mr. Ainsworth and his lovely girls. I fear the unfortunate Countess D'Orsay is a lost character. I never heard it contradicted that she became mistress to the Duke of Orleans after her quitting the friends who have to answer for the ruin of one who might, in other hands, have been so different a person. . . . Lady Blessington is grown old, coarse, and unattractive—she is fighting against wrinkles and a

[1] In *Ainsworth's Magazine*, Vol. I, p. 186.

scorbutic complexion and a very unwieldy person ; and her contemptible paramour is also growing too old to be the glass of fashion, and is overwhelmed with debt—what an old age must their's be. Their poor victim is, I fear, only interesting from her first misfortune—her unhappy connexion with them. I heard that she was many hundreds in debt for opera boxes, and that indicates no good."

Mrs. Hughes's comments on her contemporaries were often amusing, if pungent :—

" Miss Burney's letter is very interesting . . . but proves that the sisters were only half-sisters in feeling as well as blood. I can easily suppose the elder to have been far from agreeable—her latter works sickened me so much that I never had the least wish to make her acquaintance. Are you not rather shocked at Dr. Johnson's adulation, and amused at the pains taken to establish the idea of Mr. Crutchley being in love with *Evelina ;* and how very absurd is all the wonder expressed at the book being written by so young a person—she must have been 3 or 4 and twenty. Still, I am amused beyond measure, and long for the next volume where I hope there will be much of the dear old King and Queen and less of *Evelina.*[1] I did fully enjoy the slap at the Rydal Oracle,[2] though I am very remiss in not sending to know whether Mr. Crabb Robinson survived it. . . .

" I am glad I *never did take* to Mr. Wordsworth in our very short intercourse ; he seemed to be anything but natural in manners—spoilt I thought. . . . I conclude Mr. Wordsworth was in such a state of beatitude at the incense offered to his shrine by Mr. Taylor in *The Quar-*

[1] Fanny Burney's *Diary* was then, 1842, being published for the first time ; she had died two years previously.

[2] Wordsworth.

terly that only gentle feelings could find room in his mind: does Mr. Taylor mean to inculcate that at the sound of his harp, sackbut, lute, dulcimer, and all kinds of sonnets, all the world is to fall down and worship the image? I, for one, shall remain unbending—for where there is such ineffable vanity as Mr. Wordsworth's, I suspect that the clay is not only part of the feet, but at least reaches above the knees: do not call me spiteful.

"When I last saw Mr. Ainsworth, I think he told me he had the very slightest acquaintance with Miss Pardoe,[1] and I do not imagine he is at all desirous to improve it. . . . How delighted I am to find how continually we think alike on so very many subjects—most certainly on that of *The Miser's Daughter*, and could you know the author personally, I am sure we should think alike of him. . . .

"Mr. Ainsworth was with me a few days last week [October, 1842], working all day at *The Miser's Daughter*, so that our conversation was limited, but we found time to talk of you and of his obligations to you, and I promised him to present you with his most affectionate good wishes. . . ."

Ainsworth often ran down to Kingston Lisle at this period for a few days' rest at the home of his kind old friend, where the warmest of welcomes always awaited him. "Come whenever you will," Mrs. Hughes wrote to him, "You will find the warmest and truest welcome that I and mine can give; the mistress, the maids, the man, the very dogs will feel it as a *jour-de-fête*."

During these years, too, he was a very prominent figure in London society, dined out a great deal, and remained, as in his earlier days, a constant attendant at

[1] Julia Pardoe (1806–62), author of several books on French Court life, and a contributor to *Ainsworth's Magazine*.

the Opera. He frequently breakfasted with Disraeli; and Mackay, in his *Breakfasts with Rogers*, notes meeting Sydney Smith, Daniel O'Connell, Sir Augustus D'Este (son of the Duke of Sussex), and Ainsworth at one of the banker-poet's memorable matutinal entertainments at No. 22, St. James's Place.

Ainsworth's Magazine for 1843 was as great a success as its predecessor. Preference was given to contributions dealing with romantic and supernatural subjects, but not to the exclusion of other matters. Thus, a very interesting series of articles on *The Town Life of the Restoration*, by Robert Bell, and William Maginn's posthumous novel, *John Manesty* [1] (illustrated by Cruikshank), appeared in the volumes for 1843. But the most remarkable contribution was a serial story entitled *Modern Chivalry; or a New Orlando Furioso*, "Edited by W. Harrison Ainsworth." Who was the actual author remains a doubtful point. Although the work is generally attributed to Mrs. Catherine Frances Gore, her name never appeared as the writer in *Ainsworth's Magazine;* but on the anonymous publication of the tale, later in the same year, the Preface was signed with the initials "C. F. G.," which, together with the style of the story, is the only evidence that Mrs. Gore originated it.[2] Indeed, judging from what Ainsworth wrote in the Preface to the fourth volume of his Magazine, when announcing

[1] It was left unfinished by Maginn, and the conclusion of the story was written by Charles Ollier for the magazine.

[2] Catherine Frances Moody, the daughter of a wine-merchant, was born in 1799, and married in 1823 Captain C. Gore, 1st Life Guards. Mrs. Gore's first book, *Theresa Marchmont*, appeared in 1824; and the long series of Society novels which followed—such as *Cecil*, *The Manners of the Day*, *Mothers and Daughters*, etc.—present faithful pictures of fashionable life of the period. Mrs. Gore died in 1861.

the appearance of *Modern Chivalry*, one would have thought *he* was the author, for his words certainly convey that impression :—

" The two romances which have been contributed to this periodical by the pen of the Editor, have successively formed a prominent feature, which, as its attraction and success have been without rivalry, (and it might even be said, without precedent,) it is naturally supposed the reader desires to see preserved.

" The tale of *Modern Chivalry*, which he has now the pleasure of introducing, will open up, by its scenes and characters, a source of interest which it is confidently hoped will be appreciated and welcomed."

Although Ainsworth was only announced as " Editor " of *Modern Chivalry*, it is well to bear in mind that a later work of his—*James the Second*—which, in the same way, was at first stated to be " edited " by him, was subsequently issued, with his other novels, as entirely his own composition. However, this was not the case with *Modern Chivalry*, so we may assume that Mrs. Gore and Ainsworth had an equal share in the story—and a remarkably clever one their collaboration produced.

Modern Chivalry is a very mordant study of egoism, as personified in the life of a man-about-town. It contains a wealth of satiric wit and humorous observation, but it is a pitiless probe with which the heart of the selfish man is laid bare. Epigrams, worthy almost of Oscar Wilde, are numerous in this amusing production. For example : " A confidential friend—otherwise, an intimate enemy, who becomes the depositary of your secrets for the good of the public." " Most of his Eton

and Cambridge chums were now infatuated sportsmen or violent politicians,—the kennel and the cabinet forming the Scylla and Charybdis of men of high caste in Great Britain." " I have given up my racing-stud . . . there is something humiliating in a pursuit in which one is always secondary to one's trainer, and at the mercy of one's jockey." " The higher the tone of a man's mind, the lower that of the female he selects for an associate."

Modern Chivalry was illustrated with engravings by Cruikshank, the most remarkable being that of the interior of the Church of the Béguines at Ghent.

After the painful experience with " Father Prout," Ainsworth eliminated the personal element from his Magazine to a great extent. " Sonnets to the Editor " ceased to appear, and the personalities of " Our Library Table " were restricted to friendly reviews of books. These were almost always favourable, for as the editor wrote in the introduction to the third volume: " We make no fierce war on books or authors, but seek rather to find out what is good and honest and pleasant in rivals and contemporaries " ; and of the future policy of the Magazine he adumbrated: " Much of novelty remains to be brought forward, but we now need scarcely say, that it will never be in the shape of covert slander, personal attack, or indecent frivolity." This, perhaps, was also his final word to " Prout."

Ainsworth was now laudably solicitous to avoid giving cause of offence in the pages of his Magazine. Thus, he wrote to Kenealy in February, 1843: " I return you your pleasant verses on *Martin Chuzzlewit* with little scruple, because I know you can at once use them in another quarter. I fear Dickens might misunderstand

them coming from me, for he is very tenacious, and as we have only just got over an old quarrel, I do not wish to give occasion—however unintentional—for a fresh one."

In his kindly notices of new books Ainsworth very justly made an exception in the case of *A New Spirit of the Age*, by R. H. Horne, in which his own literary work was most unfairly criticized. The review of Horne's book in the Magazine was entitled *The New Gull's Horne-Book*, but cutting though it was, it might have been severer. "Horne's blackguard book was certainly treated far more civilly than it deserved. But it could not have been made sufficiently sharp without annoying other parties," Ainsworth wrote to Crossley. The critique (written by Blanchard) did not, of course, allude to Horne's attack on Ainsworth, but dealt mainly with his abuse of Barham and Bulwer-Lytton. To turn to a pleasanter subject: the review of W. H. G. Kingston's early work, *The Circassian Chief*, in the Magazine—though not really written by the editor—brought Ainsworth many grateful acknowledgments from Kingston, and a pressing offer to accept the loan of his house in Oporto,[1] which its owner pronounced to be "particularly adapted for composition."

However, Ainsworth did not go to Portugal, but took, instead, in the summer of 1843, a well-earned holiday in Cumberland and the Lake District, where he stayed, among other places, at Rayrigg Hall, on Lake Windermere, the residence of Major Skelton, whose daughter, Miss Skelton, was a frequent contributor to the Magazine.

[1] Kingston was then a young wine-merchant there. His best-known stories were not written until some years later.

The following interesting letter is to Tom Hood, who was just then writing *The Song of the Shirt* :—

" KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,
" *October 19th*, 1843.

" MY DEAR HOOD,

" Mr. Cunningham has just informed me that you propose to connect yourself with *Ainsworth's Magazine*, and I hasten to assure you of the lively satisfaction which the intelligence has given me. I receive you with open arms.[1]

" Mr. Cunningham begs me to state to you that he would have answered your communication at once, but Mr. Mortimer has not been in the way for the last few days, and I, myself, have been absent. Indeed, I may mention confidentially that there will, ere long, be a dissolution of the firm of C. and M. : but this will not affect the Magazine, or its arrangements.

" The rate of remuneration in your case will be 16 guineas per sheet—the highest terms the Magazine can afford, and higher than are given to any other contributor. Of course you retain your copyrights.

" Perhaps it is not too late for the present month. I will keep half a sheet open for you to the last moment, if you will tell me whether I may calculate upon a paper. I hope I may.

" At the end of the month I hope you will take a quiet dinner here to meet Laman Blanchard [2] only. We can then talk matters over.

" Pray make my best regards to Mrs. Hood. Assure yourself that I shall be happy to forward your views in any way in my power, and believe me,

" Very faithfully yours,
" W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

[1] Hood resigned the editorship of *The New Monthly Magazine* in January, 1844 ; but soon after started *Hood's Magazine*.

[2] Sub-editor of the magazine.

A short time after, he sold *Ainsworth's Magazine* to his publisher, John Mortimer, for £1000, but remained the editor at a liberal salary. There was thus no marked change in the policy of the Magazine, except that the contributors were not so highly remunerated. Ainsworth always flung his money about generously, and never counted the cost, but things had to be more carefully conducted now. Thus, in a request, through Mrs. Hughes, that Mrs. Southey would again become a contributor to the Magazine—on the scale of a guinea per page—he wrote: "I blush to offer *such* a writer such terms, and with all my heart would do more, but I have another man's purse to draw upon and not my own, and in these times of literary depression I dare not promise more." Robert Southey had died the same year, and Mrs. Hughes, in broaching Ainsworth's proposition, said:—

"It has long been Mr. Ainsworth's wish to propose this, but he waited till time had been allowed you to recover in some degree from the crushing effects of all you have suffered. . . . He is no longer the proprietor, but remains the *Editor* of the Magazine to which you lent such kind aid at the commencement. . . . Mr. Ainsworth seems to have pleased himself much by having got rid of trouble and responsibility, and all the plague of monthly accounts. He retains a handsome remuneration as Editor, and after giving himself some months' entire leisure, which has done him all possible good both in health and spirits and calm of mind, he is going to begin another work to appear in the Magazine. His fortune, I am happy to say, is sufficient for all his wants, should he find the resumption of literary labour irksome."

This relaxation of business cares enabled Ainsworth to indulge his taste for travelling. Since 1839 he had been

practically tied to town by the exigencies of his literary labours; but with increase of fortune, from 1843, he was constantly moving about, and was also able to devote time to other matters. Thus, in 1844, he served on the committee formed to raise funds for erecting the Scott Monument, in Edinburgh; and, in September, attended the meeting of the British Archæologists at Canterbury, in the company of his friends, Lord Albert Conyngham—the President,—Barham, Pettigrew, Thomas Wright, and Crofton Croker. The week's meeting included visits to Dover and Barfreston, and the opening of Saxon barrows on Barham Downs, of which a full account will be found in the notice Ainsworth wrote for his Magazine. In this year he also paid visits to East Court, Cheltenham, Liverpool, and Manchester; and in November he went to stay with Lord Albert Conyngham, at Bourne, near Canterbury. Ainsworth writes to his daughters from there: "I have enjoyed myself here extremely. Lord Albert is a capital host, and takes care under any circumstances that time shall not hang heavy on his guests' hands. Bourne is a large, most comfortable, old house—with a great hall in which generally a large wood fire, with great iron dogs, is burning. Against the wall is a large collection of weapons, strange guns, swords, executioners' knives, and many other odd things. Here we sat on Tuesday night, after dinner, smoking Turkish tobacco. Yesterday we went out with Lord Albert's small beagles for a run. To-day we have been shooting since 10 o'clock as long as the light lasted, and have killed 61 head of game. I wish you could see Lord Albert's three pretty little daughters—they are the nicest little girls I ever beheld."

Lord Albert Conyngham (created Lord Londesborough in 1850) was the third son of the first Marquis Conyngham, by his wife, Elizabeth, née Denison, who wielded such influence over George IV in his latter days. Lord Albert Conyngham inherited the famous property of Denbies, Surrey, from his maternal uncle, Joseph Denison, M.P.

Owing to his prominence in the book world, Ainsworth naturally received many letters from literary aspirants. He always did his best to help such, as the following typical reply will illustrate :—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,
"HARROW ROAD,
"*February Nineteen*, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Not to keep you in any suspense, I am sorry I cannot be of any use to you in the matter in question. Your best course will be to submit your manuscript to some publisher—Mr. Colburn, for instance—who will place it in the hands of one of his regular readers, and thus the only opinion worth having will be obtained. But I think it right to apprise you—if you are ignorant of the fact—that these are bad times both for known and unknown writers, the latter especially.

"One of Mr. Bentley's literary advisers I happen to know. It is Mr. Charles Ollier—a gentleman of very considerable ability. And if the manuscript were submitted to him I have no doubt he would deliver an opinion upon it. But of course such an opinion could not be gratuitous, and a fee must be given for it.[1]

[1] Apparently Ainsworth was suggesting that the MS. should be submitted to Ollier in his private capacity, and not that of Bentley's reader. There is no record that publishers of that period charged a fee for giving an opinion on a MS. In these days, when everybody writes, publishers would have no objection to receiving a fee with a MS.

Mr. Ollier's address is 18, Hayes Place, Lisson Grove.

"This is all I can do in the matter. . . .

"In haste, Your faithful Sert.

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

An engraving of Ainsworth's portrait, by Daniel Maclise, R.A.—which was exhibited at the Royal Academy the same year—formed the frontispiece of *Ainsworth's Magazine* for 1844. (This picture represents the author seated in a chair, carved with his armorial bearings, and is considered to be one of the artist's best works; the attitude of the sitter is almost identical with that of Dickens in the portrait painted by Maclise in 1839.)[1]

The Magazine this year was not so good as its predecessors: there were too many feeble effusions from the pens of ladies afflicted with *cacoethes scribendi* admitted. There was, however, one famous contribution—Leigh Hunt's long series of papers entitled *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla*, where, in his most delightful style, he ranged over and culled the sweets from such subjects as the legends and mythology of Sicily, pastoral poetry, and bees.

In the Magazine for 1844, also, was first issued Ainsworth's next romance, *Saint James's; or the Court of Queen Anne.* The ideas for this work had been in his mind for some years, and early in 1842 it was announced for publication by Hugh Cunningham, with illustrations by W. Alfred Delamotte; but this part of the scheme was abandoned, and no traces of the artist's designs for the story are extant.

Saint James's is in a very different category to the fine romances written by Ainsworth previously and to two,

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 276.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH, AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-NINE.
From the portrait by Maclise, R.A., 1844.

at least, that followed it: it has but little pretensions to literary merit, and the romantic glamour so characteristic, as a rule, of the author's works is lacking. Still, the book presents a lively picture of life at the Court of Queen Anne, and the plots and cabals engendered there. Perhaps the best incident in *Saint James's* is the description of the supper-party at Mr. Saint-John's, wherein are introduced all the famous literary and theatrical characters of the period, including Congreve, Prior, Sir John Vanbrugh, Addison, Steele, Wycherley, Kneller, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Oldfield, and Mrs. Bracegirdle. It was cleverly done. Ainsworth alludes to this scene in a letter to an old friend, who had highly praised *Saint James's* during its serial appearance :—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,
"*March 4th*, 1844.

"MY DEAR OLLIER,

"Thanks for your very gratifying letter. Your commendations are so hearty, and so judiciously made, that though I dare not appropriate above half of them, while I set down the other half to the score of prepossession and kindness, I am not the less flattered and obliged. Praise is so far valuable, in that it serves as a stimulant to greater exertion; and you may rely upon it my story will be all the better for your warm encouragement; nay, there is no saying but it may turn out in the end as good as you would have it to be now. Again, therefore, thanks. To please *one* faithful and intelligent reader like yourself, and to be thoroughly understood by him (as you have convinced me I am) is enough for me. I felt the objection which you raise to Saint-John's supper. But I could not resist the temptation of inviting all these wits to my little party. My aim was

to give a *mere picture* of these great people. To make them talk would have required a volume, instead of a chapter, and then would not have pleased. . . .

" Ever, my dear Ollier, Heartily yours,

" W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

The Duke of Marlborough is a prominent character in the story. Strangely enough, the Jacobite Ainsworth had a great admiration for Marlborough, who, valiant soldier as he was, did not hesitate to betray his benefactors, the Stuarts, again and again. When Thackeray produced *Esmond*, Ainsworth wrote to Crossley : " Have you read Thackeray's book ? I am enraged beyond measure at his attacks on Marlborough." [1] In *Saint James's* the author essayed a very generous defence of his hero, the Victor of Blenheim ; and there are some interesting references to his opinion of Marlborough's character in the following letter to his friend and brother-novelist, G. P. R. James, to whom *Saint James's* was dedicated :—

" KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,

" *October 26th*, 1844.

" MY DEAR JAMES,

" It gives me sincere pleasure to inscribe this book with your name. Not that I think it worth your acceptance, but that the Dedication will afford me an opportunity of expressing the great regard which, in common with the rest of your private friends, I entertain for you, as well as the admiration with which, in common with the whole reading world, I regard your many and varied performances.

[1] See also the reviews of *Esmond* in *The New Monthly Magazine*, 1852, then edited by Ainsworth, wherein Thackeray's injustice to Marlborough is strongly reprehended.

" The idlest of the race of authors myself, as you are the most industrious, I used to be filled with wonder at your extraordinary fertility of production ; but when I became more intimately acquainted with your energetic character, and unwearied application, and understood better the inexhaustible stores of fancy, experience, and reading you have to draw upon, my surprise gave way to admiration.[1]

" Your brother writers owe you a debt of gratitude, though I fear it has been but imperfectly paid. It is mainly, if not entirely, to your influence and exertions, that Continental Piracy has received a check, and that unauthorized foreign reprints of English works have been kept out of the market. May opportunity be given you to do yet more for us !

" One word as to my story. I know not whether my portraiture of Marlborough will please you. Very likely not. If I have painted him too much *en beau*, it is because almost every other writer has shaded his character too deeply ; underrating his brilliant services, and dwelling upon his few failings, rather than upon his many and exalted qualities. While reading some of these ungenerous memoirs, I could not help echoing the indignant exclamation of Frederick the Great—' What, could not Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, nor Malplaquet, defend the name of that great man, nor even Victory itself shield him against envy and detraction ? ' Happy are you in the friendship of a Hero [2] who has

[1] Although G. P. R. James (1801–60) was four years older than Ainsworth, he did not commence his literary career so early as his friend. *Richelieu* appeared in 1829, and then followed a long series of novels with astonishing rapidity. He also wrote such works as *The Life of the Black Prince* and *A History of Chivalry*. During his last years, James acted as British Consul at Massachusetts (1850–2), at Richmond, U.S.A. (1852–6), and at Venice (1856–60), where he died.

[2] The Duke of Wellington. G. P. R. James lived at " The Oaks," Walmer ; and the Duke, of course, was at the Castle in his last years and a neighbour of the novelist's.

extended the glory of British Arms even further than Marlborough extended it; whose victories have thrown Blenheim and Ramilies into the shade; and whose laurels have never been tarnished like those of the Great Commander of Queen Anne's Day.

"The amusement and instruction they have derived from your writings have endeared you to hosts of readers; but if they were as well aware of your excellent qualities of heart as they are of those of your head; if they knew the enlarged views you take of human nature; the rare liberality you exhibit towards your contemporaries; and the kindly sympathies you entertain for all, they would estimate you as highly as

"Your sincere friend,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

In *Saint James's* the author introduced some ballads, this time of a humorous nature, to be chanted by the tall Sergeant. The story was illustrated by George Cruikshank, who furnished fourteen clever plates during its serial appearance in *Ainsworth's Magazine*. For some reason, five of these illustrations were omitted in the first edition of *Saint James's*, which was published the same year, 1844, in three volumes, by John Mortimer; and it is strange that the omissions should have included two of the best and most amusing plates—"The Double Duel" and "Sergeant Scales's Drum." Perhaps this deletion may have played some part in generating the troublous affairs which will be detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK AND HIS CLAIMS.

SAINT JAMES'S was the last novel of Ainsworth's that Cruikshank illustrated, and the inimitable partnership was dissolved in 1844—finally. Why author and artist, who had worked so successfully together, both artistically and financially, took this much-to-be-regretted course has never been clearly demonstrated. Cruikshank hinted it was the change of proprietorship of *Ainsworth's Magazine* which caused his separation from his literary friend, and probably this was the case. Mr. Mortimer, the new owner of the Magazine, was, like Cruikshank, a Scotchman, and no doubt the fiery artist soon discovered that his canny compatriot was not so generous with the "siller and bawbees" as the careless and free-handed Ainsworth. The latter, too, was not just then contemplating the issue of any work separate from the Magazine, and so, having no need of the immediate services of his old illustrator, he and Cruikshank drifted apart—unfortunately for both. The author's subsequent romances lost the aid of the artist's invaluable pencil, and the artist lost the additional fame and fortune which would have been his had he illustrated *The Lancashire Witches* and other works.

Although we are anticipating events by twenty-eight

years, this seems the most appropriate place for dealing with Cruikshank's preposterous claim to have been the "originator" of some of Ainsworth's best novels; for, as the artist has latterly figured so prominently in this narrative, it is more convenient to describe now (following on the brilliant work he executed for Ainsworth, mentioned in the immediately preceding chapters)—rather than later, in strict chronological sequence,—the wretched dispute which arose, in print, between artist and author in their old age concerning the inspiring origin of those very romances upon which they had worked together so happily and successfully in the days of their prime. "Dispute," however, is scarcely the correct word to designate this unhappy affair, which was engendered solely from a senile delusion in the once-active and powerful brain of Cruikshank: Ainsworth merely refuted a false and preposterous assertion, just as Forster did, in the same connection, in defence of his dead friend, Dickens.

Before entering into the details of the matter, it may be premised that George Cruikshank was of Scotch descent, though born in London in 1792. His father, Isaac Cruikshank, a struggling artist of considerable merit, was a Lowlander, and his mother—Mary MacNaughton—came from the Highlands. From the fact that young George Cruikshank was early thrown on his own resources and had to earn his living from childhood, may be traced much of that self-confidence and didactic manner so prominent in the man. George wielded the pencil skilfully at the age of seven years; he was only in his teens when he executed his biting caricatures in *The Scourge;* and by the time he was twenty-one he had

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.
From the sketch by Maclise in "Fraser's Magazine."
Reproduced from "The Maclise Portrait Gallery" by permission of
Messrs. Chatto & Windus.

inherited the mantle of Gillray and become the leading social and political caricaturist of the period—as the Regent (George IV) found to his cost.

The youth of George Cruikshank was very wild and tempestuous. He was gifted with high animal spirits, and these added to a reckless love of adventure and an aggressive, dare-devil disposition, involved him in many an escapade and broil in the low-ways of life. In order to study scenes and characters for his sketches of London life, young Cruikshank frequented the vilest company and haunts in the town—low taverns, gambling dens, prize-fighting cellars, fairs, the foot of the gallows even—where he met in choice profusion prize-fighting bullies, demireps, thieves, and worse. From his models Cruikshank acquired their modes of life. He got his nose put awry for the rest of his mortal career in a boxing bout, and was seldom sober. In fact, he enjoyed and experienced to the full in his own person the wild pleasures and adventures he so inimitably depicted for Egan's *Life in London*. It was not without reason that Maclise sketched *The* Great George seated on a beer-barrel, with a picture of a prize-fighter on the wall.

Although as years passed on he overcame the almost chronic intemperance of his early manhood, Cruikshank was very convivial in his prime—such as we saw him at Kensal Lodge in the late " Thirties "—and occasionally he would break out and return to the old haunts and low associates of his youth for a night of wild dissipation. His battle with his enemy was a hard one ; and as late as 1846, when he had already taken up the Temperance cause, he would be found trying to climb up a lamp-post, or lying in an insensible condition on the pavement—

after a jolly evening with his friends and a lapse from his good resolutions. But he conquered at last.

Cruikshank's career may be roughly divided into three stages. First, the social satirist and political caricaturist; second, the book illustrator, when he reached the height of his wonderful powers and produced, in particular, the splendid designs for Ainsworth's romances; third, the enthusiastic teetotaler. This last period extended from 1847, when he issued *The Bottle*, until his death in 1878. During these thirty years he executed much excellent work, but the greater portion of it aimed at propagating the fiery cross of the crusade he was waging with almost fanatical vehemence—Total Abstinence.[1]

It was during his second stage that he was associated with Ainsworth; and, as we have seen, he illustrated, in succession, *Rookwood*; *Jack Sheppard*; *Guy Fawkes*; *The Tower of London*; *The Miser's Daughter*; *Windsor Castle*; *Modern Chivalry*; and *Saint James's*; and was also illustrator-in-chief of *Ainsworth's Magazine*. Then came the separation of 1844, after which Ainsworth saw or heard scarcely anything of his old friend until nearly

[1] The late Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A., told me an amusing story of Cruikshank's Temperance zeal, which he had from the artist himself. Cruikshank, returning home late one night, caught a burglar in the act of leaving his house, and, being a powerful man, he soon captured the intruder and handed him over to a policeman, who happened to arrive on the scene. On the way to the station, Cruikshank, who never lost an opportunity of preaching his doctrine, commenced to lecture his captive: "Now, my man, I can tell Drink has been the cause of your downfall. I can smell it. Be warned by me, give it up, and save yourself from ruin. See what I am, I have never drunk anything stronger than water for twenty years." Said the burglar, regretfully: "I wish I had known that when yer fust collared me; and I'd 'ave knocked your d—— old head off!" Bill Sikes evidently held the doctrine that malt maketh the man.

thirty years later, when Cruikshank proclaimed himself the " originator " of certain books he had illustrated for Ainsworth and Dickens.

This extraordinary assertion first came under public notice in 1871, when John Forster, in his *Life of Charles Dickens*, flatly contradicted a statement by Dr. Shelton Mackenzie, published in an American paper, to the effect that on one occasion in London he had seen at Cruikshank's house a bundle of drawings illustrating the well-known characters and scenes in *Oliver Twist*, and that Cruikshank had narrated concerning these very same designs :—

" Dickens dropped in here one day . . . and ferreted out that bundle of drawings. When he came to that one which represents Fagin in the condemned cell, he . . . told me he was tempted to change the whole plot of his story. . . . I consented to let him write up to as many of the designs as he thought would suit his purpose, and that was the way in which Fagin, Sikes, and Nancy were created."

Of this story, Forster said, there was but " one unpolite word (in three letters) which would have been applicable to it," and for its complete refutation he was fortunately able to reproduce in facsimile a letter from Dickens to Cruikshank, in which the author stated he had just seen for the *first* time the majority of the plates for the *last* volume of *Oliver Twist*, and was so displeased with one of them that he requested the artist to design " this plate afresh."

One would have thought this more than enough for Cruikshank, and that he would air no more his claims of

" originating " books he had illustrated; however, he chose to stand by the story he had told Dr. Shelton Mackenzie, and in order to strengthen it, and at the same time keep in the eye of a fickle public who were forgetting him, he decided to open fire on Ainsworth and claim to be the " originator " of some of that author's best work. The opportunity came with the production of a dramatic version of *The Miser's Daughter*, entitled *Hilda*, at the Adelphi Theatre, in April, 1872. So Cruikshank, following the usual course of an Englishman with a grievance, real or otherwise, wrote :—

" To the Editor of THE TIMES.

" SIR,—Under the heading of ' Easter Amusements ' in *The Times* of the 2nd inst., it is stated that Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth's novel of *The Miser's Daughter* had been dramatized by Mr. Andrew Halliday, and produced at the Adelphi Theatre, and as my name is not mentioned in any way in connection with the novel—not even as the illustrator—I shall feel greatly obliged if you will allow me to inform the public through the medium of your columns of the fact (which all my private friends are aware of) that this tale of *The Miser's Daughter* originated from me, and not from Mr. Ainsworth.

" My idea suggested to that gentleman was to write a story in which the principal character should be a miser, who had a daughter, and that the struggles of feelings between the love for his child and his love of money, should produce certain effects and results; and as all my ancestors were mixed up in the Rebellion of '45, I suggested that the story should be of that date, in order that I might introduce some scenes and circumstances connected with that great party struggle, and also wishing to let the public of the present day have a peep at

the places of public amusement of the period, I took considerable pains to give correct views and descriptions of those places which are now copied and produced upon the stage ; and I take this opportunity of complimenting my friend Halliday for the very excellent and effective manner in which he has dramatized the story.

" I do not mean to say that Mr. Ainsworth, when writing this novel, did not introduce some of his own ideas ; but as the first idea and all the principal points and characters emanated from me, I think it will be allowed that the title of *originator* of *The Miser's Daughter* should be conferred upon, Sir, Your obedient servant,

" GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

" 263, *Hampstead Road. April 6th.*"

This extraordinary effusion elicited the following reply from Ainsworth :—

" To the Editor of THE TIMES.

" SIR,—In a letter from Mr. George Cruikshank which appears in *The Times* of to-day, that distinguished artist claims to be the originator of *The Miser's Daughter.*

" I content myself with giving the statement a positive contradiction.

" Mr. Cruikshank appears to labour under a singular delusion in regard to the novels he has illustrated, it is not long since he claimed to be the originator of Mr. Dickens's *Oliver Twist.*

' Your faithful servant,

" W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

Cruikshank returned to the fray, and extended his claim to some more of Ainsworth's works, as follows :—

"THE MISER'S DAUGHTER.

"To the Editor of THE TIMES.

"SIR,—I am fully aware that you will not allow any controversy to be carried on in *The Times* upon such a trifling matter as this; but as Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth gives a positive contradiction to my statement which appeared in *The Times* on the 8th inst., I have to beg that you will permit me to express my regret that his memory should be in such a defective state, that he should have forgotten the circumstances and facts as to the origin of *Oliver Twist*, and of *The Miser's Daughter*; and I regret also this contradiction of his will compel me, in justice to myself, to give in a work I am preparing for the press a full, true, and particular account of all the professional transactions between Mr. Ainsworth and myself, in which I shall prove, beyond all fear of contradiction, that I am also the sole originator of what is called 'Ainsworth's *Tower of London*,' as well as another work bearing his name, but the ideas and suggestions of which were given to him by, Sir, your obedient servant,

"*April* 10*th*. "GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"P.S.—Allow me to add that it ought to be understood that it is one thing for an artist to illustrate an author's own ideas; and quite a different matter when a literary man adopts and writes out the ideas of another person."

Ainsworth's reply to this was short and to the purpose:—

"To the Editor of THE TIMES.

"SIR,—I disdain to reply to Mr. Cruikshank's preposterous assertions, except to give them, as before, a flat contradiction.

"Your faithful servant,

"*April* 11*th*." "W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.

Hereupon the Editor of angry, boiling Britons' safety-valve pronounced his dread dictum, "We can publish no more letters on this subject." Cruikshank's fiery, obstinate temper was now, however, fully roused, and, baulked of further notoriety in *The Times*, he issued at his own cost a pamphlet entitled, *The Artist and the Author*—"Proving that the Distinguished Author, Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth, is 'labouring under a singular delusion' with respect to the origin of *The Miser's Daughter*, *The Tower of London*, etc."

Of this precious "Statement of Facts," the politest thing to say is that it consists of a series of "inexactitudes" both "terminological" and egregious—as will be proved presently by documentary evidence. First, however, let us hear what Cruikshank had to say in the pamphlet:—

"As Mr. Ainsworth's *positive* and *flat contradictions* and his contemptible insinuation as to my *labouring under a singular delusion*, has led some persons to form erroneous ideas and to draw false conclusions upon this question, I feel placed in a very serious position as regards my character for truthfulness, and the condition of my intellect; and I am therefore *compelled* in *self-defence*, to place certain facts before the public, to prove beyond the fear of *contradiction*, that what I have asserted *is the truth*, and that it is Mr. Ainsworth who *is labouring under a delusion*, or has unfortunately lost his memory. . . .

"A question has been asked publicly, and which I grant is rather an important one in this case, and that is why *have I not until lately claimed to be the originator of Oliver Twist?* To this I reply that ever since these works

were published, and even when they were in progress, I have in private society, when conversing upon such matters, always explained that the *original ideas and characters* of these works *emanated from me.*[1] . . . And with respect to Mr. Ainsworth's insinuation as to *my* ' labouring under a delusion ' upon this point—as all my literary friends at that time knew that I was the originator of *Oliver Twist,* and as Mr. A. and I were at that time upon such intimate terms, and both working together on *Bentley's Miscellany,* is it at all likely that I should have concealed such a fact from him ? No ! no ! he knew this as well as I did ; and, therefore, in this matter at any rate, it is he who is ' labouring under a delusion.' . . . I state that Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Dickens came together one day to my house, upon which occasion it so happened that I then and there *described* and *performed* the character of ' Fagin ' for Mr. Dickens to introduce into the work as a ' receiver of stolen goods,' and that some time after this, upon seeing Mr. Ainsworth again, he said to me, ' I was so much struck with your description of that Jew to Mr. Dickens, that I think you and I could do something together. . . .'

" I will now explain the reason why I have *publicly* asserted my right as the originator of *The Miser's Daughter.*

" On the 1st of December, 1871, there appeared in No. 28 of *The Illustrated Review,* a short Biographical sketch of Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth—with a portrait of that gentleman ; and in the list of the many and various works written by him, the following are placed in chrono-

[1] Cruikshank's arguments concerning Dickens are omitted here, as they have been demolished by Forster, and it is the assertions concerning Ainsworth that I have to deal with primarily.

logical order :—No. 1. *Rookwood.* 2. *Jack Sheppard.* 3. *Guy Fawkes.* 4. *The Tower of London.* 5. *Old St. Paul's.* 6. *The Miser's Daughter.* 7. *Windsor Castle.* 8. *St. James's ; or the Court of Queen Anne.*

"Now, *six* of these works were illustrated entirely by me, and one—*Windsor Castle*—partly so, numbering altogether ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR of the very best designs and etchings which I have ever produced ; and yet, in this Biographical Sketch, *my name* is not mentioned in any way as connected with these works—which omission, I thought, was not only very ungenerous, but also very unjust. . . . And, when it was announced that Mr. Andrew Halliday had dramatized *Ainsworth's 'Miser's Daughter,'* I went to see the performance ; and when I saw represented on the stage *scenes and characters* which had *emanated* from me, I then publicly claimed to be the *originator* of that romance, and to have suggested the original idea and the characters to Mr. Ainsworth."

[Cruikshank certainly had a legitimate grievance if the play-bills did not state that the scenes were from his well-known designs: on the other hand, Ainsworth might have retorted that he was unjustly used when second-hand booksellers catalogued *his* books under Cruikshank's name, on account of the latter's plates.]

To continue Cruikshank's statement :—

"No. 1. *Rookwood* . . . was written and published before I became acquainted with Mr. Ainsworth ; but I illustrated for him what I believe was a second or third edition of this work. [The fourth.]

"No. 2. *Jack Sheppard,* illustrated by me, and pub-

lished in monthly parts in *Bentley's Miscellany*. This story *originated from Mr. Ainsworth*, and, when preparing it for publication, he showed me about two or three pages of manuscript on ' post paper ' ; *and I beg that it may be observed that this was the only bit of manuscript written by this Author that I ever saw in the whole course of my life.*

" No. 3. *Guy Fawkes*, suggested by Mr. Ainsworth, and illustrated by me. . . .

" No. 4. *The Tower of London*, the ORIGINAL IDEA of which was SUGGESTED by me to Mr. Ainsworth, and also *illustrated* by me, and published in monthly numbers. In this work Mr. Ainsworth and I were *partners*, holding equal shares.

" No. 5. *Old St. Paul's*, illustrated by Mr. Franklin, and the reader will please to observe that this work *stands next* to *The Tower of London*, and *precedes*

" *The Miser's Daughter*, marked No. 6 ; and this is followed by

" No. 7. *Windsor Castle ;* the *first part* illustrated by the French artist, Tony Johannot, and the remainder by me, George Cruikshank. . . .

" No. 8. *St. James's ; or the Court of Queen Anne*, which was the last work of Mr. Ainsworth's I ever illustrated. . . .

" I must here first state, that as large sums of money had been realized from my ideas and suggestions for the work of *Oliver Twist*, it occurred to me one day that I would try and get a little of the same material from the same source ; and as Mr. Ainsworth and I were at that time upon the most friendly—I may say brotherly—terms, I suggested to him that we should jointly produce a work on our own account, and publish it in monthly

numbers, and get Mr. Bentley to join us as the publisher. Mr. Ainsworth was delighted with the idea of such a partnership, and at once acceded to the proposition; and when I told him that I had a capital subject for the first work, he inquired what it was; and upon my telling him it was the *Tower of London*, with some incidents in the life of Lady Jane Grey, he was still more delighted; and I then told him that I had long since seen the room in the Tower where that beautiful and accomplished dear lady was imprisoned, and other parts of that fortress . . . and if he would then go with me to the Tower, I would show these places to him. He at once accepted my offer, and off we went to Hungerford Stairs, now the site of the Charing Cross Railway Station, and whilst waiting on the beach for a boat to go to London Bridge, we there met my dear friend, the late W. Jerdan . . . who inquired where we were going to. My reply was, that I was taking Mr. Ainsworth a prisoner to the Tower. With this joke we parted. I then took Mr. Ainsworth to the royal prison. . . ."

Now for refutation No. 1. In his Preface to *The Tower of London*, dated 1840, Ainsworth stated: "It has been, *for years*, the cherished wish of the writer of the following pages to make the Tower of London . . . the groundwork of a Romance." Cruikshank never contradicted this definite pronouncement: most certainly the artist did not first suggest the Tower as the *scene* of Ainsworth's romance, but he may have suggested the period of history selected for description in the work.

More serious was Cruikshank's next assertion in his "Statement":—

" I have now most distinctly to state that Mr. Ainsworth *wrote up to most of my suggestions and designs*, although some of the subjects we jointly arranged, to introduce into the work; and I used every month to send him the *tracings* or *outlines* of the *sketches or drawings* from which I was making the etchings to illustrate the work, *in order that he might write up to them*, and that they should be *accurately described*. And I beg the reader to understand that all these *etchings or plates were printed and ready for publication before the letterpress was printed*, and sometimes even before the Author *had written his manuscript. . . . I, the Artist, suggested . . . the original idea, or subject* . . . furnishing, at the same time, the principal characters and the scenes . . . and the Author had to *weave in* such scenes as I wished to represent, and sometimes I had to work out his suggestions."

Not " sometimes," but often. The following typical letter will prove that Cruikshank had to sketch the various portions of the Tower as *directed by Ainsworth* :—

" *August 2nd*, 1840.

" My dear George,

" . . . Pray, when you are at the Tower, sketch the Gateway of the Bloody Tower from the south; the chamber where the Princes were murdered; the basement chamber, at the right of the Gateway of the Bloody Tower, near the Record Tower, and interior of the Record Tower. . . . I return to-morrow (Monday), and shall be at Kensal Lodge before four o'clock. If, therefore, you choose to proceed to the Tower in the morning, and come out to me by the omnibus leaving Paddington at 3 o'clock, you will be in time for dinner, and we can do

a good deal of work before 8, when you can return by the same conveyance. . . . If not able to come on Monday, I shall depend on meeting you at Pettigrew's on Tuesday at *half past 12*, and . . . I will drive you out to Kensal Lodge, and we can fully arrange our subjects for the next No.

" Yours always,

" W. Harrison Ainsworth."

It will be seen, therefore, that Ainsworth was the leading spirit, and that Cruikshank worked entirely under his directions. And in further proof that the artist could not work, or decide any matter, upon his own responsibility is the following letter :—

" My dr. Ainsworth,

" You will disappoint me exceedingly if you do not come—indeed you ought to do so, for I wrote to Mr. Bentley to say that *you* and myself wished to see him upon the subject, and it makes quite another affair if you stay away. Besides which I have been calculating upon seeing you to decide two or three points about the Tower. Now, mind, unless I see you at 6 o'clock you will throw my work back and throw me out altogether.

" Yours in half a passion, but yours truly,

" Geo. Cruikshank."

And in another letter to Ainsworth concerning *The Tower of London*, the artist wrote :—

" How could you leave town without seeing me ? ? ? ! . . . Five minutes' talk would have been worth five hours to me. I am almost afraid the execution is *too* horrible ? Let me know what your opinion is by return of post. The tracing of Xit's Marriage you will have to-morrow. He is returning thanks, and the monkey, who is dressed

up in his old cloathes [*sic*], is pulling his cloak; judge his surprise, when he *turns round*—the monkey might jump on his back—Xit jumps off the table, runs off with the monkey on his shoulders. What say you to ravens or carrion crows hovering over the body of Dudley and sweeping over the scaffold? Jane might be taken into the Beauchamp Tower to await the return of Mauger, etc. N.B. Very few spectators at Jane's execution.

" Yours almost distracted,

" GEO. CRUIK[K]."

As this letter demonstrates, the artist often made valuable suggestions which the author adopted—such as the carrion crows wheeling over the body of Dudley—and Ainsworth himself gladly acknowledged the help he had received in this way. But suggesting incidental details and picturesque accessories is a very different matter to " originating " plots and characters. Had Cruikshank confined his claim to the first-named matters, there would have been no denial from Ainsworth, no public wrangle, and no shadow of misrepresentation hanging over the memory of the brilliant artist. There is not a fraction of evidence in any of Cruikshank's letters that he ever attempted to influence the course of Ainsworth's plots, or suggested any characters or even a prominent incident: all his suggestions are limited to scenic details and accessories and the situation of the persons depicted in the plate. Thus, again concerning *The Tower of London*, he wrote: " I enclose the 4th tracing. If you look at the plan of the Tower you will find an odd sort of building abutting on the Salt Tower, which perhaps you may make something of. . . . The Masque I have dec ided upon at last. One of the giants

is dressed up, or rather cased up, to represent a tower of strength, on his head is a turret, in which Xit as Cupid is seated. . . . There is some *rare* fun and *rough* work, for the giants (mind the Tower uses his arms with a club in each hand) belabour and upset the assailants."

And here are Cruikshank's ideas for the arrest of Jack Sheppard in Willesden churchyard :—

" Jonathan Wild has hold of Jack's left arm with *his* left hand, and grasps the collar with his right. The Jew has both his arms round Jack's right arm and Quilt Arnold has hold of the right side of Jack's coat. This fellow in making his spring at Sheppard may upsett [*sic*] the gravedigger, who nearly falls into the grave. I should advise the approach of the attacking party to be thus. The Jew and some other fellow go round the *north* of the church and lurk there, and Qt. Arnold in that road at the N.W. corner—Wild himself to come along the *south* side so as to take Jack in the rear. Darrell is about to draw his sword. In the other subject I have given Jonathan a *stout* walking stick."

This is an example of what Ainsworth termed the " excessively troublesome and obtrusive " phase of Cruikshank's suggestions, and a reference to the letter-press of *Jack Sheppard* will show that the author did *not* adopt the artist's plan for the " approach of the attacking party."

More than enough has now been adduced in refutation of Cruikshank's assertion that Ainsworth " wrote up " to his designs ; and we will now pass on to the artist's next plaint—of what happened after the completion of *The Tower of London* :—

"I told Mr. Ainsworth that I had another capital subject for *our next work.* 'Ah! what is it?' said he; to which I replied, 'The Plague and the Fire of London.' 'Oh!' he exclaimed, 'that *is* first-rate.'

". . . Mr. Ainsworth and I parted with the understanding that *The Plague and the Fire* was to be our next work, and that we were each to prepare accordingly. . . . At that time I resided at Pentonville, and Mr. Ainsworth at Kensal Green—some miles apart—and after some time had elapsed, as Mr. Ainsworth had neither called upon me, nor written to make an appointment, I rode out to his house at Kensal Green, but when arrived there I could neither see nor hear anything of my *friend,* and I remember trotting back very much surprised and disappointed. However, it was not very long after this that I did hear something of Mr. Ainsworth, and which was *that he had engaged to write a* 'romance' for *The Sunday Times* newspaper on this very subject which I had suggested to him, and which we had arranged to *publish as partners,* of *The Plague and the Fire,* under the title of *Old St. Paul's,* and for which he was to receive £1000!!!

"It appears that after this romance of *Old St. Paul's* was finished in the newspaper, the 'copyright' reverted to the *author,* who then brought out *Old St. Paul's* in three volumes—*illustrated,* please to observe, not by me! No; not by George Cruikshank. No! no! the *Author,* Mr. Ainsworth, of course, could not apply to me, so he employed an artist of the name of Franklin, to make the illustrations. So there was another artist working out my pet subjects, which I had nursed in my brains for many years . . . and there was this *Author,* Mr. Ains-

worth, getting all the profit out of an *idea which I had suggested to him for the purpose of our publishing the work as partners!*"

Now, in the absence of any contradiction from Ainsworth, we may grant that Cruikshank did suggest the idea of a book dealing with the Plague and the Fire, and it is much to be regretted that he did not execute the designs to illustrate Ainsworth's story; but the artist's complaint that another illustrator was "working out his pet subjects" was too absurd. Cruikshank here claimed the monopoly of the Plague and the Fire, and that no one else had the right to illustrate it—the subject was *his*![1] Despite Cruikshank's statement, Ainsworth *did* "apply" to him to illustrate *Old St. Paul's*, and he declined to do so!

Two months only after the commencement of *Old St. Paul's* in *The Sunday Times* (where, of course, the story was unillustrated), Ainsworth proposed to Cruikshank that he should design the plates for the work, when issued in volume form, and here is the artist's letter refusing the offer. The date is important:—

"Amwell St.,
"*March* 4, 1841.

"My dear Ainsworth,

"Mr. Pettigrew called here yesterday and stated your proposition. Had that proposition been made any time between last December up to about a fortnight back, I should have been happy, *most* happy, to have accepted the offer—but now I am sorry to say, that I cannot—no, I have so far committed myself with various parties

[1] Murray's edition, 1833, of Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* contained four illustrations by George Cruikshank, which were not particularly remarkable. It is undeniable that the artist executed his best work with the inspiring aid of Ainsworth.

that if I were to withdraw my projected publication I am sure that I should be a laughing-stock to some and—what is worse—I fear that with others I should lose all title to honor or integrity. I do assure you, my dear Ainsworth, I sincerely regret that I cannot join you in this work, but what was I to think—what conclusion was I to come to, but that you had *cut* me. At the latter end of last year, you announced that *we* were preparing a 'New Work'! In the early part of December last I saw by an advertisement that *your* 'New Work' was to be published in *The Sunday Times*. You do not come to me, or send for me, nor send me any explanation. I meet you at Dickens's on New Year's Eve. You tell me then that you will see me in a few days and explain everything to my satisfaction. I hear nothing from you. In your various notes about the *Guy Fawkes* you do not even advert to the subject. I purposely keep myself disengaged, refusing many advantageous offers of work—still I hear nothing from you. At lenth [*sic*] you announce a 'New Work as *a companion to The Tower'!* without my name. I then conclude that you do not intend to join me in any 'New Work,' and therefore determine to do something for myself—*indeed, I could hold out no longer.* To show that others besides myself considered that you had left me, I was applied to by Chapman & Hall to join them and Mr. Dickens in a speculation, which, indeed, I promised to do, should the one with Mr. Tilt [1] be abandoned. However, I have still to hope that when you are disengaged from Mr. Bentley that some arrangements may still be made which may tend to our mutual benefit.

"I remain, my dear Ainsworth,

"Yours very truly,

"GEO. CRUIKSHANK.

[1] Tilt and Bogue, Fleet Street, were the publishers of *George Cruikshank's Omnibus*, 1842.

" Mr. Pettigrew pressed me much to accede to your proposal—and I am sure would be happy to serve either of us—but felt that it would be useless to meet on Saturday should my determination remain the same as I expressed to him. I have written to him to say that it is so—you will therefore not expect to see us."

However odd, and seemingly discourteous, Ainsworth's behaviour was at the outset, it is perfectly plain that he, a few weeks later, gave Cruikshank the opportunity to illustrate *Old St. Paul's*. The artist declined, and brought out a work of his own—*The Omnibus*—in May, 1841. Then, some months after, came the next step in this curious affair, and Ainsworth's envoy again approached Cruikshank, when, to continue the artist's Statement:—

" Pettigrew called upon me one day with a message from Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth to this effect, that he (Mr. Ainsworth) was extremely sorry that there had been any unpleasantness between us, and that if I would forgive him and be friends, nothing of the kind should ever happen again; that he was about to start a monthly magazine, and that if I would join him, and drive my *Omnibus* into his magazine, he would take all the risk and responsibility upon himself, and make such arrangements as would compensate me liberally. To this most unexpected proposition at first I would not listen, but as my friend Pettigrew kept on for some time urging me to be friends again . . . I *did* forgive Mr. Ainsworth, and ' shake hands ' and agree to work with him again. . . .

" Before *Ainsworth's Magazine* was published, advertisements were put forth that I, George Cruikshank, was to be the illustrator thereof; and the *artist and the author*

then held a consultation as to what tale or romance we were to commence with, and which I was to *illustrate*. . . . *I then suggested to Mr. Ainsworth* MY idea of THE MISER'S DAUGHTER. . . .

"After *Windsor Castle* came the romance of *St. James's; or the Court of Queen Anne;* and *after* that, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth *sold his magazine* to his publishers! So it really appeared as if all this gentleman's promises, like pie-crust, were made to be broken . . . and I, as it were, again 'thrown overboard,' or 'left in the lurch.' . . ."

Here we have a typical example of Cruikshank's "inexactitudes." Ainsworth, as related in the last chapter, sold his Magazine in the *summer of* 1843, and *Saint James's* did not *commence until January*, 1844.

Cruikshank proceeds: "After the second edition of Mr. Ainsworth's extraordinary conduct towards me, I certainly did not expect ever again to receive any communications or overtures from that quarter; but, lo and behold! my friend Pettigrew came to me again, with a *second* entreaty from Mr. Ainsworth, to be once more reconciled and be friends, so that we might work together again!

"When I heard this, my friend the Doctor found that it was not at all necessary to feel my pulse; for he could plainly *see* that it beat *rather fiercely*, when, in reply, I said, 'No, Pettigrew. Mr. Ainsworth has acted towards me in what I consider a most dishonourable manner upon *two* occasions; and I will take care that he shall not do so a *third* time!"

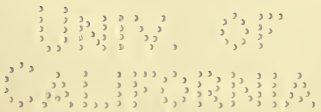
Cruikshank concluded his "Statement" by citing a

list of well-known men who would have substantiated his assertions, among them Douglas Jerrold and Laman Blanchard; but, as Blanchard Jerrold pointed out in his *Life of George Cruikshank*, these two most certainly would not have done so, for they died long before the "claim" developed in the artist's mind. Laman Blanchard, indeed, also experienced the effects of Cruikshank's "originating" fever. One night Cruikshank was at the house of Laman Blanchard, the editor of *The Omnibus*, and a third person happened to praise a poem that had appeared in the last number. Whereupon Cruikshank remarked that it was his idea as well as his illustration. "I don't call to mind another occasion," said the recorder of this incident, "when I saw Blanchard give way to a violent fit of passion; but on this he did. The idea and the poem were one of his bright and graceful fancies; and he rose and denied that Cruikshank had had the least share in it, with a fierceness that confounded poor George."

It is now necessary to give some extracts from the reply to the artist's "Statement" which Ainsworth wrote for Blanchard Jerrold's *Life of George Cruikshank*, and where it will be found *in extenso* :—

"A FEW WORDS ABOUT GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"On the production at the Adelphi Theatre of the late Mr. Andrew Halliday's drama, founded on *The Miser's Daughter*, George Cruikshank sent a letter to *The Times*, loudly complaining of the omission of his name from the playbill, and asserting that he had suggested the title and general plan of the story.



"A more preposterous assertion was never made. Had there been any truth whatever in the claim thus impudently advanced, why was it not made long before? The story was written thirty years previously—namely, in 1842—and after that long interval the old artist sets up this absurd pretension.

"I believed him to be in his dotage, and was confirmed in the opinion when I found he laboured under a similar delusion in regard to *Oliver Twist*.

"For myself, I desire to state emphatically, that not a single line—not a word—in any of my novels was written by their illustrator, Cruikshank. In no instance did he even see a proof. The subjects were arranged with him early in the month, and about the fifteenth he used to send me tracings of the plates. That was all. . . ."

[In explanation of the origin of the scheme of *The Miser's Daughter*, Ainsworth proceeded to give the details which were quoted, to a great extent, in the previous chapter, when dealing with that work, and continued :—]

"*Ne sutor ultra crepidam.* Had Cruikshank been capable of constructing a story, why did he not exercise his talent when he had no connection with Mr. Dickens or myself? But I never heard of such a tale being published.

"I have been connected with many distinguished artists—with Sir John Gilbert, with Tony Johannot, with Hablot K. Browne, John Franklin, and others, and never heard that any one of them claimed a share in the authorship of the works he illustrated.

"But overweening vanity formed a strong part of Cruikshank's character. He boasted so much of the assistance he had rendered authors, that at last he believed he had written their works. Had he been connected with Fielding, he would no doubt have asserted

that he wrote a great portion of *Tom Jones*. Moreover, he was excessively troublesome and obtrusive in his suggestions. Mr. Dickens declared to me that he could not stand it, and should send him printed matter in future.

"It would be unjust, however, to deny that there was wonderful cleverness and quickness about Cruikshank, and I am indebted to him for many valuable hints and suggestions. . . .

"On my retirement from *The Miscellany*, at the close of the year 1841, I resolved to bring out a magazine of my own, and with that view went to Paris to secure the famous Tony Johannot as illustrator of *Windsor Castle*. I found M. Tony Johannot a most charming person, as he had been described to me, and passed several pleasant days in his society. He agreed to send me four plates, the subjects of which I gave him, together with designs for the cover of the magazine, and the title-page of story, and performed his promise to my entire satisfaction.

"On my return I was induced by my friend Mr. Pettigrew to engage George Cruikshank as the illustrator of the magazine, on terms infinitely more advantageous to the artist than those he had received from Mr. Bentley for his illustrations to *Jack Sheppard* and *Guy Fawkes*. . . .

"The last story of mine, illustrated by Cruikshank, was *Saint James's; or the Court of Queen Anne*, published in 1844. Since that date I saw very little of the artist. . . .

"Of Cruikshank as a teetotaler I can say nothing, because I saw nothing of him. When I knew him, he was extremely convivial, and used to sing a capital song, and dance the sailor's hornpipe, almost as well as the great T. P. Cooke. Perhaps he may have rather exceeded the bounds of discretion, but if he took a little too much he was hearty and good-humoured, and would never have boasted as he afterwards did of writing portions of *Oliver Twist* and *The Miser's Daughter*. "W. H. A."

Ainsworth rather missed the point at issue: Cruikshank did not claim to have written any portion of the books in question, but to have "originated" them.

But the artist's claim of "originator" was, in all conscience, so original that one is lost in wonder at the far-reaching possibilities of the new theory he so modestly enunciated. Pursued to its consistent and logical end, the whole history of literature would have to be rewritten, and long-withheld honours bestowed on those "originators" whose suggestions, or personal characteristics and appearance, caused certain scribes—mere pen-wielders, according to Cruikshank—to appropriate fame and fortune to themselves. Thus Boccaccio and other story-tellers could claim to be the "originators" of many of Shakspere's greatest plays, and Lord Pembroke "suggested" the Sonnets; Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* belongs to his sister; Adam and Eve "originated" *Paradise Lost;* Richardson (via *Pamela*) *Joseph Andrews;* Mrs. Hughes *The Ingoldsby Legends;* Hallam *In Memoriam;* and poor Walter Scott will scarcely have one of "his" romances left to his credit, so "suggested" were they by older legends. To come further down the scale—appropriate to this new ethics of literary composition, Wordsworth's *Idiot Boy* and Coleridge's *Young Ass* can claim joint fame with the bards who hymned them; and to pursue this fascinating theory to inanimate things, Notre Dame was the "originator" of Victor Hugo's masterpiece, and the Auld Brig o' Ayr of Burns's immortal poem. And so on *ad infinitum* to music or any created work—the blacksmith with his hammer and anvil was the "originator" of Handel's *Harmonious Blacksmith,* and, of course, the sitter or scene in any

famous picture is more entitled to " originating " fame than the unimportant painter thereof. Cruikshank evidently based his doctrine on the fable of the organ-blower, who claimed equal credit with the organist for the music they conjointly produced. In this case, however, one could accomplish nothing without the other: Cruikshank and the authors he illustrated were quite able to work separately on their own account.

But, seriously, it is indeed incomprehensible how a man of Cruikshank's intelligence could assert, and endeavour to prove, such a preposterous claim as this of " originating " books he illustrated for Dickens and Ainsworth. It was not so much the public ridicule the matter brought upon him as the slur upon his veracity that was to be the most regretted in the case of a brilliant artist who had served and amused the public long and well. Had Cruikshank made his claim in his convivial days—when he looked overmuch on the wine when it is red—there would have been an obvious excuse for him: but Cruikshank the " Originator " was contemporary with Cruikshank the Teetotaler. This being so, the only possible explanation of the artist's extraordinary assertions is that he was a victim of senile delusions. In coming to this conclusion I have had the advantage of consulting two of Cruikshank's friends—Mr. Austin Dobson and the late Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A.—and they both believed that he was really deluded and not a *wilful* prevaricator. Mr. Frith, who knew Cruikshank intimately, said his claims concerning Dickens's and Ainsworth's works were an " absurd delusion," and that Cruikshank would not intentionally be guilty of any deviation from the truth. Mr. Frith added that George, in speaking of

Oliver Twist, would say, "Dickens just gave it a little literary touching up, but persisted in calling the hero Oliver Twist. I wanted him to be called Frank Stedfast." [1]

Mr. Austin Dobson said to me: "I certainly think Cruikshank was honestly deluded, but he was, no doubt, a vain man"; and the same distinguished writer, in his memoir of Cruikshank in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, has observed: "He was not exempt from a certain 'Roman infirmity' of exaggerating the importance of his own performances. . . . Whatever the amount of assistance he gave to Dickens and to Ainsworth, it is clear that it was not rated by them at the value he placed upon it. . . . It must also be conceded that he most signally seconded the text by his graphic interpretations; but that this aid or these suggestions were of such a nature as to transfer the credit of *The Miser's Daughter* and *Oliver Twist* from the authors to himself is more than can be reasonably allowed."

Granting, then, that Cruikshank was deluded, it must, at the same time, be remembered that he was temperamentally a very likely subject for such chimera as we have been considering. He was an intensely self-conscious man, who possessed, in addition to much vanity, extreme egoism, and a fiery temper, all the acute sensitiveness of the artistic temperament and a vast imagina-

[1] The Brothers Dalziel, in their *Record of Work*, relate of Cruikshank and *Oliver Twist* that he maintained "that he had not only suggested the subject to Dickens, but that he had also given him the entire plot, sketched the characters, arranged all the incidents, and, in fact, constructed the entire story . . . for all that Dickens had to do with it 'was *to write it oot*, and any man who could hold a pen might have done it better'; concluding with 'I am only sorry now I didn't do it myself.' These were the old man's identical words, as spoken to us."

tion—best measured by the versatility of his creations. He was thus wholly unfitted to judge critically his own achievements (great as they were), to estimate correctly his share in books he illustrated, and to conduct an argument with fairness and equanimity.[1]

The Brothers Dalziel recorded a typical example of Cruikshank's vanity :—

" The vain, versatile George Cruikshank believed himself another Admirable Crichton. He really thought he could do anything . . . once . . . he said—' It was by the merest chance that I did not go into the Navy ; and with my knowledge of such matters, no doubt I would have been a rear-admiral. . . .' "

And, again, he once drew a hat after a certain design, and later on said : " The Russian soldiers, I find, wear a hat something of this shape *now ;* and no doubt they saw my pattern, and stole my idea."

Concerning Cruikshank's fiery temper and proneness to take offence, there is amusing evidence in a letter from Ainsworth to W. Alfred Delamotte, at the time the latter artist and Cruikshank were both engaged in illustrating *Windsor Castle :*—

" My dear Delamotte,

" You had better call on George Cruikshank—his address is 23, Amwell Street, Pentonville—not far from

[1] During a dispute with Brook, a publisher, he drew a picture of himself holding his enemy by the nose with a pair of tongs. This appeared in *A Popgun Fired Off*, 1860, but was subsequently withdrawn when Brook threatened Cruikshank with an action.

It is interesting to note that another talented but irritable artist, Wiertz, whose gifts for portraying the bizarre and ghastly resembled Cruikshank's, pictured a journalist, with whom he had a dispute, in the rôle of Quasimodo and covered with wens, his unfortunate victim being afflicted in the flesh with these ills in a minor degree.

you, and show him your designs, when you have got them on the wood. You must smooth him down as much as possible—for he is a very jealous fellow. Tell him this is a special occasion, and I do not think he will interfere with us. But he must be kept in good humour. . . ."

History does not relate how The Great George received his fellow-illustrator of *Windsor Castle.*

It is quite possible that Cruikshank's delusions, concerning books he had illustrated, originated from the excessive and injudicious praise he received from certain friends. Thus, Thackeray's remark anent *Jack Sheppard* —" It seems to us that Mr. Cruikshank really *created* the tale "—might tend to make the artist forget his actual share in this work, more than a third of which was written before he commenced to illustrate it. And then, again, the prescient Walter Thornbury's profound dictum —" Ainsworth's tawdry rubbish—now all but forgotten, and soon to sink deep in the mudpool of oblivion,—was illuminated with a false splendour by this great humorist "—was flattering to a fulsome degree. (Yet the compliment was a doubtful one, for surely a " great humorist " should not prostitute his talents to illuminate " tawdry " and muddy things with " *false* splendour " ; and the " tawdry rubbish " has not sunk to the bottom of oblivion's pool yet.)

Such remarks undoubtedly increased Cruikshank's already sufficiently strong conviction of the aid he had rendered to Ainsworth, and caused him to publish abroad the unfortunate claims which have redounded so much to his own discredit. But Cruikshank was always his own enemy. As Ainsworth wrote to Pettigrew : " Poor

George . . . what an impracticable, odd fellow he is, and how unable to discern his true interests."

It is sad to relate that this vexed question between Ainsworth and Cruikshank was never cleared up, and the latter died without being reconciled to his old friend with whom he had worked so successfully in days gone by. This chapter has been an unpleasant one to write, but it was imperative to state the true facts of Ainsworth's connection with Cruikshank.

But let our last glimpse of the artist—before he disappears from these pages—be a pleasant one. So, forgetting the delusions, the misunderstandings, and the bitter recriminations of 1872, we will return to 1842—to those jolly days at Kensal Manor House, with author and artist seated at the library table, working together in inimitable association; when the romances of Ainsworth were being wonderfully illustrated by the genius of that great artist, George Cruikshank.

CHAPTER XVIII

"AURIOL." PURCHASE OF "THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE": ITS CONTRIBUTORS. "JAMES THE SECOND."

AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE for 1845 opened with a portrait of the Editor, engraved from a pencil sketch by his friend, Count D'Orsay. This was accompanied by a notice from Ainsworth's pen of *The D'Orsay Gallery*—the series of sketches of prominent people which the Count had executed since settling in London in 1832. Several articles on other subjects were also written by the Editor.

The most extraordinary romance that ever emanated from Ainsworth's brain was the unfinished *Auriol*—for, judging from its abrupt and unsatisfactory termination, it was not completed as the author, presumably, intended. *Auriol* is a veritable nightmare and amazing jumble of antithetical incidents. Its *motif* is the Elixir of Life, and the period embraces both the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Scenes of wildly imaginative mystery and compacts with the fiend alternate with the most prosaic events of everyday life in the London of 1830. *Auriol* contained the germ of a very fine plot, and if Ainsworth had devoted more pains and attention to this work it might have developed into, perhaps, his most powerful romance. Even as it stands—carelessly constructed and incomplete—this bizarre story is very strik-

AINSWORTH AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-NINE
From the sketch by Count D'Orsay

ing, and the opening description of old London at the dawn of the seventeenth century is singularly picturesque.

Auriol made its first appearance in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, 1844–5, under the title of *Revelations of London*, illustrated by some wonderful steel engravings by Hablot K. Browne.[1] These were the first designs "Phiz" executed for Ainsworth, and represent some of his finest work. "The Ruined House in the Vauxhall Road" is a *tour de force;* and the dramatic power and mystery of "The Elixir of Long Life"; "The Seizure of Ebba"; "The Chamber of Mystery"; and "The Tomb of the Rosicrucian" are in perfect sympathy with the wild and ephialtes spirit of the scenes in the text they illustrate. "Phiz," henceforth, became illustrator-in-chief of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, and succeeded to the position vacated by Cruikshank. In addition, soon after the completion of *Auriol*, "Phiz" furnished two designs for a new edition of *Old St. Paul's;* then came his eighteen fine plates for the first illustrated edition of *Crichton*, followed by illustrations for many of Ainsworth's subsequent books, as will be noted in due course.

But to return to *Auriol*. Before the story was completed in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, the author had a disagreement with John Mortimer (the owner of the periodical), resigned his editorship, and purchased *The New Monthly Magazine*. Ainsworth wrote to Crossley concerning these matters :—

"*June 7th*, 1845.

". . . After a week's shifts and turns, Mortimer paid the amount of his bill. But he failed to pay the editorial

[1] *Auriol*, apparently, was not published in book form until many years later, in 1865. Since then, several editions with H. K. Browne's fine illustrations have been issued.

honorarium (£60 at the beginning of this month). In consequence, I gave him notice I should retire altogether from the Magazine. He has accepted my retirement, but threatens actions at law for some breach of agreement. This, however, is mere bravado, and I treat it as such. I have been offered the proprietorship of *The New Monthly Magazine* by Colburn for £2500. He requires the money down. *The New Monthly* yields rather better than £80 per month . . . and might be improved. At all events, I could save my own writing,—£20 per month,—or I need not write at all, a great point. I offered Colburn three of my Peak Forest Debentures, of course receiving £500 for one of them. You may remember I have four debentures, each for £1000. Now, I want to sell these three shares without delay . . . as I wish to conclude the purchase with Colburn. . . . It would be a very advantageous investment . . . and far better than establishing a new magazine. Colburn parts with *The New Monthly* because it interferes with his other publishing. He is to continue publisher at the rate of £100 per year commission. . . . I am writing this at the Conservative Club, of which I am just become a member, and can strongly recommend it to you. . . . I shall indeed grieve if my money is so locked up that I cannot use it . . . even with a trifling loss I should be glad to effect the sales."

Impetuous as usual, and never looking to the future, Ainsworth sold out his capital and bought *The New Monthly Magazine* for £2500. (In the course of his life he sunk and lost much of his money in this way, for these literary speculations, although profitable at first, deteriorated in course of time, and, when eventually disposed of, never realized the original outlay.)

On 13th June, 1845, he was able to tell Crossley:

" To-morrow I expect to become proprietor of *The New Monthly*, and have no doubt I shall find it a capital property. . . . Very likely I may purchase *Ainsworth's Magazine* from Mortimer—and incorporate it with *The New Monthly*—if I can get it for £500 or £600. This would be desirable. I have made an offer for it, but it has not been accepted. Mortimer does not know that I have bought *The New Monthly*."

The latter was an old and popular periodical dating from 1814. It was founded by Colburn on the model of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and in its early days endeavoured to wield political influence by the dissemination of high Tory principles. A change of policy, however, took place in 1820; and henceforth politics were eliminated, and *The New Monthly* began to gain its excellent reputation of a first-class literary and family magazine. Several famous men preceded Ainsworth in the editorial chair, including Bulwer-Lytton, Tom Hood, Theodore Hook, and Thomas Campbell. It was during the regime of the last named, it may be remembered, that Ainsworth, twenty-four years previously, contributed a notice of his own boyish dramas—masquerading as the work of a forgotten genius, " Richard Clitheroe." So, no doubt, in becoming the owner of *The New Monthly*, Ainsworth again gratified one of his early ambitions.

As far as possible, he endeavoured to bring over the best contributors from *Ainsworth's Magazine* to his new property. Thus, he wrote to Kenealy, on 2nd July, 1845 : " You will have seen that I have transferred myself from Mr. Mortimer's Magazine to *The New Monthly*—a step rendered absolutely necessary by the conduct of

the publisher. I could not withdraw your *Hymns*,[1] which were in type—and there was not time to get your sanction to withdraw them—but I fancy you will not longer support Mr. Mortimer, but join my ranks in *The New Monthly*, where I shall be delighted to receive you, and where your pretty song appears this month. You must stand steadily by me. . . ."

Ainsworth's acquisition of *The New Monthly* was the cause of an interesting little episode in literary history wherein Thackeray was equally concerned. Now, it must be admitted that, intimate friends as Ainsworth and Thackeray were, and fond as the latter was of his quiet Sundays at Kensal Green, the two men were not in entire sympathy with each other. Thackeray, no doubt, disliked his friend's little affectations of dress and manner, his pardonable vanity of his good looks, and his thoroughly English weakness for a title, although, later on, the great Snobiographer himself developed symptoms of the same complaint.[2] (And very naturally; Thackeray's own words—"Is there one, whose heart would not throb with pleasure if he could be seen walking arm-in-arm with a couple of dukes?"—contain a great truth, and should be adopted as the National Motto.) On the other hand, Ainsworth's hasty and highly strung temperament was keenly sensitive to Thackeray's satiric attacks in *Punch* and verbal shafts in personal intercourse. Thackeray seems to have been wanting in tact, and for one who was himself so very sensitive to criticism and personalities—as in the affair with Edmund Yates,

[1] Translations from Latin into English of the hymns used in the Roman Catholic Church.

[2] See H. Vizetelly's *Glances Back Through Seventy Years.*

for instance—it is curious how deeply he would, at times, wound the susceptibilities of others.[1]

With faults, then, on both sides, Ainsworth and Thackeray had their petty quarrels and periods of coolness—inevitable between two friends each so nervous, quick-tempered, and talented. A friendship without a quarrel requires a leading spirit and a follower. In this case, both were leading spirits, and so friction resulted at times. One of these passing differences occurred in 1845; soon after, Ainsworth issued the announcement of his acquisition of *The New Monthly Magazine*, wherein he stated that his band of contributors would include writers "eminent not only for talent, but for high rank." Now, the "high rankers" were a concession to a popular demand, for sixty years ago readers of periodicals particularly delighted in titled authors—

> "But let a lord once own the happy lines
> How the wit brightens, how the style refines."

Thackeray affected to think otherwise, and wrote as followers in *Punch*:—[2]

"IMMENSE OPPORTUNITY.

"MR. AINSWORTH, 'on whom the Editorship of *The New Monthly Magazine* has devolved,' parades a list of contributors to that brilliant periodical, and says he has secured the aid of several writers '*eminent not only for talent*, BUT FOR HIGH RANK.'

"Are they of high rank as authors, or in the Red Book? Mr. Ainsworth can't mean that the readers of

[1] See *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, by W. P. Frith, R.A., and Serjeant Ballantine's *Experiences*.

[2] 5th July, 1845.

his Magazine care for an author because he happens to be a lord—a flunky might—but not a gentleman who has any more brains than a fool. A literary gentleman who respects his calling, doesn't surely mean to propitiate the public by saying, 'I am going to write for you, and—and Lord Fitzdiddle is going to write too.'

"Hang it, man, *let* him write—write and be—successful, or write and be—unsuccessful, according to his merits. But don't let us talk about high rank in the republic of letters—let us keep *that* place clear. Publishers have sought for lordlings, we know, and got them to put their unlucky names to works which they never wrote; but don't let men of letters demean themselves in this way.

"No, WILLIAM HARRISON, trust to your own powers and genius—trust to the harrowing influence of the *Revelations of London*—trust to the contributors 'who have shed a lustre over the Magazine,' the enterprising and erudite Whatdyecallem; Thingamy 'whose domestic tales have found an echo in every bosom,' and the rest. But don't let us hear any more of high rank as a recommendation.

"If we do—look out to hear further from

"PUNCH."

Making all due allowance for Thackeray's temporary annoyance or coolness—whatever the cause—with his friend, the sneering and offensively personal tone of these remarks was quite inexcusable. Ainsworth's advertisement, it is true, was objectionable and in bad form, but Thackeray, in thus publicly assailing the man at whose table he so constantly sat, offended even more against the canons of good taste.

And now comes the amusing part of the story. A few days before the appearance of Thackeray's remarks in *Punch*, Ainsworth, totally unaware of the impending attack, and wishing to end the trifling difference with his friend, invited him to dine—and to contribute something to *The New Monthly Magazine!* Poor Thackeray was in a sad quandary with coals of fire heaped upon his head in this fashion; but he got out of his difficulties gracefully by writing the following penitential letter to Ainsworth:—

"... Of course I'll come to dinner on Sunday, and we are just as good friends as ever. Wasn't it much better to complain and explain? I think so—and the imperial house of Titmarsh is now satisfied. ...

"... Your terms are prodigiously good—and if I can see the material for a funny story you shall have it. That for which Colburn paid in advance, and which he would not trust into the author's hands until he got his money back, will run to 30, possibly to 100 pages, and is too long for you.[1]

"There's one thing I regret very much too, and must be told to you now in making a clean breast of it—is a certain paragraph in the next *Punch*, relating to a certain advertisement about contributors, 'not only of talent *but of rank.*' This moved my wrath; and has been

[1] Probably this refers to *Vanity Fair*. It is a moot point whether the MS. of this immortal work was hawked about the town and failed, at first, to find a publisher. Lady Ritchie says it "travelled about to various publishers." The weight of evidence certainly tends to prove this much—that the early chapters, entitled *Pencil Sketches of English Society* (the sub-title of the first edition of *Vanity Fair*) were submitted to Colburn, as samples of a story of then unsettled length, with a view to acceptance for *The New Monthly Magazine*, and that the publisher eventually rejected the MS. Hence the reference in Thackeray's letter above, and also, perhaps, his bitter attack in *Punch* anent Ainsworth and the magazine.

hardly handled—this was before our meeting and explanation—I always must think it a very objectionable advertisement—but shouldn't have lifted my hand to smite my friend, had explanation come earlier, so that now *you* must be called upon to play the part of forgiver, in which I'm sure you will shine.

" Ever yours, my dear fellow,

" W. M. THACKERAY."

Ainsworth, of course, did forgive, and Thackeray contributed *The Chest of Cigars* and *Bob Robinson's First Love* to *The New Monthly Magazine*, and joined the band of those " eminent not only for talent, but for high rank " ! So this very human affair had a pleasant ending.

In addition to Thackeray's, Ainsworth secured some excellent contributions for his new venture during its first year. There was the Ingoldsby *Brothers of Birchington*, and there were verses by Leigh Hunt and Kenealy. G. P. R. James supplied the serial story, *Beauchamp*, and Bulwer-Lytton's contribution took the form of a long letter addressed to Ainsworth, which was published in *The New Monthly* under the title of *Confessions and Observations of a Water-Patient.* Bulwer-Lytton was then undergoing the Water-Cure at Malvern, and he expatiated on its merits and benefits to the extent of sixteen magazine pages. But his letter also contained some personal references which will be of interest here :—

" DEAR MR. EDITOR,

" I am truly glad to see so worthily filled the presidency in one of the many chairs which our republic permits to criticism and letters—a dignity in which I had the honour to precede you, *sub consule Planco*, in

the good days of William IV. I feel as if there were something ghost-like in my momentary return to my ancient haunts, no longer in the editorial robe and purple, but addressing a new chief, and in great part, a new assembly. . . .

" . . . Let us call to mind, Mr. Editor, the illustrious names which still overshadow it at once with melancholy and fame. . . . By Campbell, the high-souled and silver-tongued, and by Hook. . . . Nor can we think of your predecessors without remembering your rival Hood, who, as the tree puts forth the most exuberant blossoms the year before its decay, showed the bloom and promise of his genius most when the worm was at the trunk. To us behind the scenes, to us who knew the men, how melancholy the contrast between the fresh and youthful intellect, the worn out and broken frame. . . . Hook jested on the bed of death, as none but he could jest. And Hood ! who remembers not the tender pathos, the exquisite humanity which spoke forth from his darkened room ? Alas ! what prolonged pangs, what heavy lassitude, what death in life did these men endure ! . . .

" For the mind, we admit, that to render it strong and clear, habit and discipline are required ;—how deal we (especially we, Mr. Editor, of the London world—we of the literary craft—we of the restless, striving brotherhood) how deal we with the body ? . . .

" I have been a workman in my day. I began to write and to toil, and to win some kind of a name, which I had the ambition to improve, while yet little more than a boy. With strong love for study in books—with yet greater desire to accomplish myself in the knowledge of men, for sixteen years I can conceive no life to have been more filled by occupation than mine. . . . To a constitution naturally far from strong, I allowed no pause or respite. The wear and tear went on without intermission. . . . As long as I was always at work, it

seemed that I had no leisure to be ill. Quiet was my hell.

"At length the frame thus long neglected . . . worn out and wasted, the constitution seemed wholly inadequate to meet the demand . . . about the January of 1844, I was thoroughly shattered.[1] . . .

"Adieu, Mr. Editor, the ghost returns to silence.

"E. BULWER-LYTTON."

As Bulwer-Lytton refused to accept any monetary remuneration for his lengthy paper, Ainsworth presented him with two suits of old armour—which are still at Knebworth, the splendid ancestral home of the Lyttons.

In *The New Monthly Magazine*, 1845–6, appeared Captain Marryat's *Privateersman*, of which the hero, and, indeed, the originator and part-author, was Captain Robinson Elsdale, who after serving some time in the Royal Navy entered the Merchant Service. He wrote an autobiographical sketch of his experiences, and the MS. came into the possession of his son, Dr. Robinson Elsdale, who was second master at the Manchester Grammar School when Ainsworth was there. Dr. Elsdale sent the narrative to his former pupil, Ainsworth, who forwarded it to Captain Marryat, asking him to edit the old sea-captain's MS. for the magazine. The naval novelist fully appreciated the merits of the autobiography, and he prefixed some introductory lines when it appeared in *The New Monthly*. Marryat subsequently continued the story, with very different adventures, according to his own fancy; and, anent the history of this novel, Ainsworth told Crossley:—

[1] Then followed the long description of his water-cure.

"Captain Elsdale was a very remarkable man . . . the early portions, and by much the best, of *The Privateersman* are simply his autobiography, without any alteration. . . . Captain Elsdale's portion of the story was entitled *Extracts from the Log of a Privateersman, a Hundred Years Ago*. . . . Captain Marryat added a few introductory lines in the form of a letter. The real narrative commences with the description of the Revenge privateer. . . . The title was afterwards changed to *The Privateersman*, as more taking. As far as I recollect, Captain Elsdale's log extends to nearly the end of the *third* chapter. . . ."

Marryat seems also to have written some of the literary reviews in *The New Monthly*, judging from the following letter:—

"*July 30th*, 1845.

"My dear Marryat,

"I have just sent off a packet of books to you and shall send another batch in the course of a month. No occasion to notice any of them, as they are all done. To-morrow *The New Monthly* will be sent you. The 'log' reads capitally, and I hope you will approve the heading I have given it. You must give a longer extract—12 pages or a sheet—next month, and let us have it early. . . .

"I must run down to you for a day in the course of the month, as I want to have some chat with you. Be as early as you can with the 'log.'

"Address me during the week

"Rock Mount,

"Tunbridge Wells.

"Ever yours,

"W. Harrison Ainsworth."

Ainsworth's own contributions to *The New Monthly Magazine* in 1845 included a short story entitled *Cecco del Orso*, and many literary and operatic reviews. Here he also reissued and completed, so far as it goes, *Auriol; or the Elixir of Life* (First Series of *Revelations of London*), which was given as a "gratuitous supplement." Hence the spiteful epigram:—

"Says Ainsworth to Colburn,
'A plan in my pate is,
To give my romance as
A supplement, *gratis*.'
Says Colburn to Ainsworth,
''Twill do very nicely,
For that will be charging
Its value precisely.'"

Ainsworth had a weakness for reprinting his romances in his magazines, and also for giving his own portraits therein. Consequently, he was a frequent subject for the rather vitriolic pleasantries of the professional humorists, and of *Punch* in particular.

For example, in 1846:—

"ONCE MORE OUR PORTRAIT.[1]

"We wished to present a New Year's gift to all and every of our readers. We were puzzled what to select that should sufficiently mark our regard for them, when dear Harrison Ainsworth helped us out of the dilemma, by suggesting to us that *Punch* should follow his example, and give to the world another portrait. Well, we felt that, with Ainsworth, we had given ourselves in every way; full-face, profile, three-quarters. At length, it

[1] *Punch*. Vol. X, p. 31. The sketch is reproduced here by permission of the Proprietors.

struck us that the world had not as yet a correct portrait of the back of our head. Here then it is :

"NOT BY MACLISE.

" It will be seen that our organ of philoprogenitiveness is very large ; a fact indicating that we take a most prodigious conceit in the children of our brain. Whether Punch and Ainsworth agree in this particular will be proved next January, when Mr. A. will, as in duty bound, give to the world a view of *his* occiput."

It is also interesting to note that Ainsworth figured in Edgar Allan Poe's famous *Balloon Hoax*, which startled New York in April, 1844. *The New York Sun*, a daily newspaper, appeared one morning with flaring headlines, in magnificent capitals well garnished with notes of admiration, worded as follows :—

" Astounding News by Express, via Norfolk !

" The Atlantic Crossed in Three Days !

" Signal Triumph of Mr. Monck Mason's Flying Machine.

" Arrival at Sullivan's Island, near Charleston, S.C., of Mr. Mason, Mr. Robert Holland, Mr. Henson, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, and four others in the Steering Balloon, ' Victoria,' after a passage of Seventy-five hours from Land to Land !

" Full particulars of the Voyage ! "

The whole thing was, of course, a hoax concocted by Poe, who, in the account which followed, purported to describe how Mr. Monck Mason invented a steerable balloon on " the principle of the Archimedean screw for the purpose of propulsion through the air," which was constructed at Weal-Vor House, near Penstruthal, North Wales—the seat of Mr. Osborne (a nephew of Lord Bentinck), a gentleman much interested in aeronautics. The ascent was made on 6th April at 11 a.m. A Journal of the Voyage was kept by Monck Mason, and a post-script was appended each day by Ainsworth, " who has in preparation and will shortly give to the public a more minute and, no doubt, a thrillingly interesting account of the voyage." It was originally intended to go to Paris, but a strong current of wind carrying the aeronauts toward the Atlantic, at Ainsworth's suggestion they determined to attempt to reach North America. On the first night, Ainsworth is imagined to write in the Journal: " Sat. 6th. The last nine hours have been unquestionably the most exciting of my life. I can conceive nothing more sublimating than the strange peril and

novelty of an adventure such as this. May God grant that we succeed! I ask not success for mere safety to my insignificant person, but for the sake of human knowledge and—for the vastness of the triumph. . . . The immense flaming ocean writhes and is tortured uncomplainingly. The mountainous surges suggest the idea of innumerable dumb gigantic fiends struggling in impotent agony.[1] In a night such as is this to me, a man *lives*—lives a whole century of ordinary life—nor would I forego the rapturous delight for that of a whole century of ordinary existence. . . ."

And on Tuesday, 9th, he records: "*One P.M. We are in full view of the low coast of South Carolina.* The great problem is accomplished. We have crossed the Atlantic —fairly and easily crossed it in a balloon. God be praised! Who shall say that anything is impossible hereafter?"

Soon after, the aeronauts let go their grapnel and landed at Fort Moultrie, after a trip of rather less than seventy-five hours.

This hoaxing romance was a splendid success, and took in the newspaper world completely for a short time As E. A. Poe himself remarked, when reprinting the *jeu d'esprit*, it "fully subserved the purpose of creating indigestible aliment for the *quidnuncs* during the few hours intervening between a couple of the Charleston mails. The rush for the 'sole paper which had the news' was something beyond even the prodigious; and, in fact, if (as some assert) the 'Victoria' did not absolutely accomplish the voyage recorded, it will be difficult to assign a reason why she *should* not have accomplished

[1] This is not a bad parody of Ainsworth's style, although under the circumstances something much more amusing might have been accomplished.

it." In view of the prominence of aeronautic experiments to-day, Poe's description—hoaxing though he was—of a steerable balloon so many years ago is of considerable interest.

In 1845 Ainsworth attended the meeting of the British Archæological Society at Winchester, of which he wrote an account for *The New Monthly Magazine*. His intimacy with Lord Albert Conyngham, Thomas Wright, and Pettigrew, the leading spirits of the Archæologists, was the cause of his taking a prominent part in the aims of this society. Thus, he wrote to Pettigrew: "I am obliged to you for placing me on the Tower (of London) Deputation. Steps ought to be taken to prevent the destruction of the old fortress. I have raised my voice against it, and shall raise it again."

During 1845, also, Ainsworth was at Brighton a great deal. He stayed at 38, Brunswick Terrace in August; and in the winter months rented 25, Oriental Place, and later, 6, Brunswick Square, where he and his family resided while extensive alterations and building operations were in progress at Kensal Manor House.

At Brighton he saw a great deal of Horace Smith, of *Rejected Addresses* fame, who resided in the town. Horace Smith noted: "We became very intimate with Ainsworth and his family, who passed the winter here, and gave a great many very gay parties." Brighton thus had the benefit of the hospitality usually dispensed in London. James Crossley was staying in town, at the Old Hummums[1] Hotel, Covent Garden, and Ainsworth

[1] This name was a corruption of the Eastern word Humoun, relating to hot air baths, or bagnios, formerly abounding in the locality. The old Hummums Hotel was pulled down in 1881, and a new building erected.

endeavoured to get his friend to come and join the festivities at Brighton ; but, as usual, Crossley could not make up his mind in time. Ainsworth penned a number of letters in the hope of securing him. Thus : " Come on Tuesday. . . . I can give you a bed. . . . Thursday I have a large dinner party, when you will meet three members of parliament and many pretty women." No answer from Crossley. Then Ainsworth again : " You are without exception the most extraordinary fellow I ever knew, and but that I *do* know you and your extraordinary habits well, I should be greatly annoyed with you. . . . Now, here I have kept a place for you to-morrow—though I could fill it up a dozen times—and yet you don't condescend to accept or decline. . . ." A few days later, Ainsworth again to Crossley : " I called at the Old Hummums to-day, but no Crossley. Where gone—no one could tell, but he returns to-morrow. Well, now, come down to me on Saturday. I have a dinner-party on that day . . . stay over Sunday. . . . Brighton is well worth a visit. But write an answer if you possibly can, and I will have all ready for you. . . . I will ask Horace Smith on Sunday. . ." No good, Crossley did not come, and so Ainsworth wrote : " I am very sorry we can't meet. You ought to have come down to Brighton. I have been in town this morning. In fact, I dined with Lord Albert Conyngham yesterday . . . but knowing nothing of your plans I did not call at the Old Hummums. . . . They are a stupid set of fools at the Old Humdrums, and you ought to cut the place."

Horace Smith became a frequent contributor to *The New Monthly Magazine,* and some extracts from Ains-

worth's letters to him on the subject may be of interest:—

"25, Oriental Place, Brighton,

"*November 25th*, 1845.

"Very many thanks for the poem you have been good enough to send me, which will occupy the post of honour (if there be one?) in the January number of *The New Monthly*, where one of its earliest and best contributors will be heartily welcome. Again many thanks. You have added to the kindness I have already experienced from you. Do not be under any apprehension. The poem is not a jot too long—quite the reverse. It is fresh and vigorous and evidences undecaying powers, favour of conception, and masterly execution. I am delighted with it, and so will be all the readers of *The New Monthly*. For the third time—thanks! To-morrow I am off to my native town, Manchester, for a day or two, where I am called, partly by matters of pleasure, partly of business. . . . During my absence I have told my daughters to place my carriage at the disposal of yourself, Mrs. Smith, and your daughters, on any day that you like to use it. . . ."

"I am very much obliged to you for telling me about *The New Monthly*. It is entirely Colburn's omission. Your name is on the gratis list, and will always continue so, while the property is mine, and the Magazine ought to have been sent as usual. Captain Marryat wrote to me to say that he had not received his copy, and I can only hope the neglect is not wilful, but as Colburn ceases to be publisher with the present number, it looks, I must own, rather suspicious. . . ."

"I like your poem better in print even than in manuscript, but if I could raise an objection it would be at the very threshold, as I cannot quite reconcile myself

to the rhythm of the first line. In all other respects it is perfect and singularly striking. I wish in some future number—when you are so inclined—you would give me a prose paper—one of your delightful essays."

"*December 12th*, 1845.

"I am really very much obliged to you for your extreme kindness in presenting me with the poem, and I certainly will not frustrate your kind intentions by refusing it on the terms on which you so obligingly insist; but you must permit me to say that I still consider myself your debtor, and shall only be too happy if you can point out a way at any time that I can return the favour in kind. I should like to apply for your assistance on some future occasion—if you will allow me to do so—in the character of an editor who will consider himself sufficiently served and obliged by being able to number you among his contributors on the usual terms. If you consent to this, I would beg another poem whenever you feel in the vein."

Though Ainsworth was thus continually adding to his circle of distinguished friends, Time's inevitable changes bore others away, and in this year (1845) he lost two valued companions, whose friendship was of long standing —Laman Blanchard and Richard Barham.

Blanchard, a writer who had made his name entirely by his own efforts—being the son of a painter and glazier of Great Yarmouth—had been intimately associated with Ainsworth since the latter published his poems, *Lyric Offerings*, in 1828. It was Blanchard's fate to expend his great talents on the ephemeral fame of journalism. From *The True Sun* and *The Courier* to *The Court Journal* and Cruikshank's *Omnibus* he ranged as editor. He was

sub-editor of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, wherein he wrote most of the reviews, and was always a particularly welcome guest at his chief's house. Thackeray, Dickens, Forster, Maclise, and Bulwer-Lytton were greatly attached to him also. In 1844, after the death of his wife, Blanchard suffered from fits of depression and became the victim of delusions. On 14th February, 1845, Ainsworth said to Bulwer-Lytton that he feared Blanchard was in a state of mind that required instant attention. They agreed to meet at John Forster's the next day, to consult and arrange something for the benefit of their friend. When they reached Lincoln's Inn Fields at the appointed time, it was but to learn that poor Blanchard had committed suicide. The object of his friends was now to aid his orphan children. With some other help, a sum was raised to educate them. The three boys were later placed in situations, the daughter at the Royal Academy of Music, and Ainsworth handed over for their benefit the copyright of Laman Blanchard's numerous contributions to *Ainsworth's Magazine*.[1]

Barham died on 17th June following—a short time after writing his last exquisite fancy, *As I lay a-thynkynge*. The genial canon was a great friend of Ainsworth's, who had been a frequent visitor at the quiet old house in Amen Corner, under the shadow of St. Paul's, where many of the immortal *Ingoldsby Legends* were composed.[2] Barham was devoted to cats—his pets would sit on his

[1] See *New Monthly Magazine*, 1846, for an appreciative notice of Blanchard, written by Ainsworth, and a selection from his friend's letters to him.

[2] A sketch of the life of Barham, with anecdotes, will be found in a long letter from John Hughes to Ainsworth in *The New Monthly Magazine*, 1845.

table and shoulder as he wrote—and he was a singularly kind-hearted man. He had taken the greatest interest in Ainsworth and his literary work from the time when they first met at the house of Mrs. Hughes. "It delights me to find that you like 'both my little ones,' and I trust you will like them still better the older they grow," Ainsworth had written in reply to Barham's praise of *The Tower of London* and *Guy Fawkes;* and, as already related, Barham read *Jack Sheppard* in proof and made valuable suggestions.

At the close of 1845 Ainsworth regained possession of *Ainsworth's Magazine,* and henceforth both this and *The New Monthly Magazine* were published by Chapman and Hall. In the former periodical, for 1846, Ainsworth re-issued *Old St. Paul's,* and his shorter pieces—*Michele Orombello; A Night's Adventure in Rome;* and *Sir Lionel Flamstead* (*The Old London Merchant*).[1] There was also a translation of Dumas's *Monte Cristo* by W. Francis Ainsworth; and other contributors included Surtees, Kenealy, and Thomas Wright, the antiquarian, who furnished an interesting paper on Sorcery and Magic.

Ainsworth was an admirable editor for a magazine. He had everything under his own supervision and would insist on reading all the contributions sent—although his sub-editors were anxious to spare him this labour. As in *The Miscellany* days, he continued to take a kindly interest in the literary prospects of his contributors, and often advised them on the course they should pursue. The following letter, which will serve as an example of

[1] With Cruikshank's illustration, which had appeared with the sketch in *The Pic-Nic Papers,* 1841.

how he would devote time and trouble to further the interests of a new writer, was addressed to Miss Eliza Meteyard—better known by her *nom de journal* of "Silverpen"—at the outset of her literary career :—

"Mr. Harrison Ainsworth presents his compliments to Miss Eliza Meteyard, and begs to acknowledge the receipt of her paper, which he has very little doubt will suit his own Magazine. . . . Mr. Harrison Ainsworth thought *Struggles for Fame* [1] a work of the very highest promise, and on his return to town he will do himself the honour of calling upon Miss Meteyard to confer with her on her literary prospects and offer her some suggestions which may, he hopes, be serviceable to her.

"6, *Brunswick Square, Brighton.*
"*January 22nd,* 1846."

Again, Mrs. Lynn Linton [2] has recorded how, when a young girl, in 1845, she posted her rhymes to Ainsworth, "with a letter of entreaty which must have amused him by its fervour." [3] To her great delight, Ainsworth accepted the poem (which duly appeared in his Magazine), and in sending her two guineas for it, he wrote to assure the young writer that she would be successful if she persevered, and promised to accept all such work from her as suited his magazines. This early encouragement from a prominent figure in the book-world caused Mrs. Lynn Linton to devote herself in earnest to a literary career, with what result is well known.

[1] Miss Meteyard's first work, published in 1845. Her well-known *Life of Josiah Wedgwood* appeared in 1865–6.

[2] Eliza Lynn (1822–98), daughter of the Rev. J. Lynn, Vicar of Crosthwaite, Keswick, married W. J. Linton, author and wood-engraver, in 1858. Her first novel, *Azeth, the Egyptian*, appeared in 1846.

[3] *Mrs. Lynn Linton*, by G. S. Layard.

For *The New Monthly Magazine* for 1846, Ainsworth again secured the aid of Captain Marryat, who contributed *Valerie*,[1] as a serial, in his own minute chirography: "What a wonderful little hand you write! It is like copperplate and almost invisible. The compositors ought to have magnifying glasses. . . . You have literally frightened away some of the compositors from Whiting's . . ." Ainsworth wrote to him. Other contributors to the Magazine this year were G. P. R. James, Kenealy, and Horace Smith. The veteran part-author of *Rejected Addresses* supplied a long series of reflections on all manner of subjects which he entitled *The Portfolio*, and concerning this Ainsworth wrote:—

"*April 20th*, 1846.

"My dear Smith,

"Your kind note and *The Portfolio* have just reached me. The latter is precisely the thing I desired, and I am much obliged to you for it. . . . I am delighted that you promise me a continuation, but why not give your name? It would add an interest to the reflections, which only want this sort of personal identification to make them perfect. But as you please. In all matters you are liberal, and therefore I shall make the rate of remuneration the regular one—according to the depressed state of the times—Ten guineas per sheet. . . ."

And later he told Smith:—

"Your *Portfolio* is excellent and has done some good to the old Magazine. . . . How do you like Redding's *Campbell?* In the forthcoming chapter he relates the early history of *The New Monthly*, with Campbell's editorial habits, and it is very interesting to me. . . ."

[1] Owing to Marryat's illness, the conclusion of *Valerie* was written by another hand. Marryat died in 1848, aged 76, at Langham, a retired spot in Norfolk, where he settled after his active naval career.

" I wish I could get you to write an article upon Hook. Nothing pleases more than anecdotal reminiscences, and you could easily string together a few pleasant recollections of your friend. Colburn is in a rage, I'm told, at my letting the world know that the author of *Cæsar Borgia* [1] is a naughty young lady, who ought to be shut up for her improprieties. . . . My kindest regards to your cheerful circle, and say that I hope to form one of it round that most agreeable table in the course of the following week. . . ."

Ainsworth did not publish anything of much importance from his own pen during this year. He contributed a story entitled *The Astrologer* [2] for a work described as *Evenings at Haddon Hall*, edited by the Baroness de Calabrella, a sister of " Golden Ball " Hughes, whom Ainsworth became acquainted with in his earlier days at the Opera House. His time, of course, was fully occupied in editing two magazines and writing literary and theatrical reviews therein, and during the whole of the summer of 1846 he was away on an extensive continental tour, which he thus described to Crossley :—

" Kensal Manor House,
" *October* 13*th*, 1846.

" I returned yesterday after 4 months' absence. I have visited the Rhine, part of Switzerland, Milan, Venice, Trieste, Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Leipzig, and many other places. Above all I place Vienna, which is enchanting. *You* would prefer Prague. Such a glorious old Library where you might revel for a month ! . . . I

[1] This work, which appeared serially in *Ainsworth's Magazine* in 1845, was written by Miss Emma Robinson, author of *Whitefriars* and *Whitehall*.

[2] Illustrated with an engraving by George Cattermole.

saw the illustrious Rodd yesterday and almost distracted him with a description. . . . There is a theological library which seems to have been undisturbed since the Thirty Years War. Such glorious, fat, old calf-skins and such a wonderful old librarian. You would expire with delight at the sight of him and his treasures. . . . However, we must talk these things over."

At Baden-Baden, Ainsworth fell in with G. P. R. James, and at Lausanne, in August, he met Charles Dickens. The latter, in a letter to Forster, describing the meeting with Ainsworth and his daughters, said : " I breakfasted with him at the Hotel Gibbon next morning and they dined here afterwards, and we walked about all day, talking of our old days at Kensal Lodge." Those jolly times in the earlier years of friendship were never forgotten.

In January, 1847, Ainsworth bought back the copyright of his romances which had been published by Bentley, in order to issue them in a new series. In *Ainsworth's Magazine* throughout this year appeared *James the Second, or the Revolution of* 1688, which was then described as " edited " by Ainsworth. Some portions of the story may have been written by one of the editor's assistants in the Magazine ; but in view of the fact that Ainsworth's name appeared as the author when the work was published by Colburn, in 1848, it is more likely that *James the Second* was something in the nature of a pot-boiler, and that the writer was not at first very anxious to claim the story as his. Curiously enough, the rumour got about that James Crossley was the author, and Ainsworth wrote to his friend : " I met Harness the other night, and he spoke of you in high terms ; but

would insist that you are the author of *James the Second*. Nothing I could say to the contrary would shake his conviction. He said it was generally understood so in Manchester and that you had almost admitted it. Perhaps you will enlighten me as to this."

James the Second, though faulty in construction, gives a good account of the King's last months in England; of the desertion of his courtiers; and of his flight to France, in the unhappy days of 1688, which deprived his descendants of their rights. The atmosphere of intrigue that pervaded the court is well conveyed. There is a suggestion of Ainsworth's earlier style in the episodes of the highwayman, Will Davies, known as the Golden Farmer; and the great meeting of the Dissenters on Finchley Common—with the introduction of such characters as Baxter, George Fox, and John Bunyan—is picturesquely described.

James the Second was illustrated with eleven designs by R. W. Buss in the magazine, but only three of these were given—as frontispieces—on the publication of the book.

Other contributions to *Ainsworth's Magazine* for 1847 included a peculiar serial story entitled *Lancelot Widge*, by Charles Hooten, which was more or less of an autobiography;[1] many tales by W. H. G. Kingston; and a translation of *The Gascons* from the French of Dumas. In *The New Monthly*, for the same year, appeared *Margaret Graham*, by G. P. R. James; a series of curious

[1] Charles Hooten, the author of *Colin Clink*, was a clever young man who had a brief but remarkable career. At one time he led the life of a savage in Texas. He died from an overdose of morphia, at the age of thirty-four, in 1847, and Ainsworth wrote a short memoir of him for *The New Monthly Magazine*.

reminiscences entitled *Secret History of the Court and Times of George IV ;* and the earlier portions of *A Greybeard's Gossip about his Literary Acquaintance,* by Horace Smith, to whom Ainsworth writes on 6th April, 1847 : " I am just returned from Paris, where I have been for the last three weeks, and one of my first pleasures and duties is to enclose you a cheque for £5, in payment of the *Recollections* for April. . . ."

And later on in the same year he says : " I am very much obliged by your kind promise, and while returning you my thanks for your prompt acquiescence with my request, I must beg to say that I have no claim whatever on the copyright of any articles of yours which have appeared in *The New Monthly,* and that I hereby restore them to you and to your family, believing that they will one day prove valuable to them, and fully satisfied that I have myself already reaped all the benefit to which I am entitled from them. May you go on writing your biography for these twenty years ! "

In July, 1847, Ainsworth attended the meeting of the British Archæological Association in Warwickshire. He wrote to his daughter from Warwick :—

" So far the meeting has gone off remarkably well. In the same carriage with us were Lord Brooke, Sir Charles Douglas, and Mr. Arden. On Tuesday we visited the Castle and had luncheon there. Yesterday we visited Guy's Cliffe and Stoneleigh, where Lord Leigh received us most kindly and hospitably. To-day, we are going to Stratford-upon-Avon and Charlecote. There is a report here to-day that Shakespeare's house has been actually sold to some speculative Americans, and will be carried off and exhibited. . . ."

The Archæologists also visited Kenilworth, Combe Abbey, and Arbury Hall.[1]

In the autumn Ainsworth, as usual, went abroad. Writing to his daughter, Fanny, he said :—

"No. 1, Hotel Windsor,
"Rue de Rivoli, Paris,
"*October* 11*th*, 1847.

". . . I read your letters as I was breakfasting this morning at the *Trois Frères*. I went to Mayence, as I proposed, slept there, and started next morning in a dusseldorf for Cologne. On board, there were the present Attorney-General and his family. . . . At Cologne I met my three friends Lord Adare,[2] Mr. Morwich, and Sir Vere de Vere.[3] We visited the cathedral together, and started together next morning in the train. They stopped at Louvain. . . . I proceeded to Brussels, put up at the *Belle Vue*, and arrived at seven o'clock next evening at Paris. I have two capital little rooms here, and feel very snug and comfortable. After all, there is no place like Paris. Of that I am now convinced. Vienna, Munich, Dresden, Berlin, must hide their diminished heads before it. As a place of amusement it stands alone. To-day has been lovely, and I have been wandering about looking at the pretty things in the shops, and admiring all the new fashions. I dine to-day with Sir Fitzroy and Lady Kelly.[4] They are at the Hotel Bristol. We go afterwards to the Opera to hear Alboni. . . ."

[1] See Ainsworth's account of the Archæological Meeting in *The New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXXX.

[2] Afterwards 3rd Earl of Dunraven, b. 1812, d. 1871. He was a noted authority on Celtic archæology and literature.

[3] Sir Vere Edmond de Vere (1808–80), 3rd Bart., and brother of Aubrey de Vere, the poet.

[4] Sir Fitzroy Kelly, b. 1796, had been Solicitor-General 1845–6, and became later Attorney-General and Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

And on his return he wrote to Crossley :—

" Kensal Manor House,
" *October 29th*, 1847.

" . . . I have made rather an extensive tour, embracing every city of note in Germany, and have descended the Danube to Pesth. Ten days at Paris wound me up very pleasantly. I have heard nothing of Dickens or Forster since my return, and only know that the last *Dombeys* are infernally bad—an opinion not confined to myself but shared by all the reading world. I hope your affairs are getting a little better in Manchester—otherwise none but attornies can be jovial. Have you tasted the sublime port of Stocks lately ? . . . I was not returned when your invitation to the Athenæum arrived, as probably you learnt from W. F. Ainsworth, who opened all my letters in my absence. . . . I detest the Athenæum soirees, and think them the stupidest things in the world ; and if I do come down, it will be merely to please you. It was my intention to visit Manchester in the course of the month, and I can time my stay in that week if you make a point of my coming ;—it being clearly understood also that I am not to be asked to speak, you can accept the invitation for me, in any manner you think proper, omitting all disgust on my part. . . ."

And a few days later he added :—

" *November 10th*, 1847.

" I have written . . . to Gilbert Winter to say I shall be with him at dinner on Wednesday, and that if Dickens accepts the invitation we shall come together. But you must by no means reckon upon him, for I have a suspicion he will not come. But I shall write and ascertain his intentions positively. Provided I am not bored about speaking, I shall be as comfortable as I can be under the

circumstances of these soirees which, I confess, are not at all to my taste. Yesterday I dined at the Guildhall Banquet—a great scramble and a bad dinner. . . ."

But Crossley forgot the important reservation that Ainsworth would not speak at the Manchester Athenæum soiree, and so he received the following letter :—

" Notwithstanding my peremptory notification to you to the contrary, I have received a written request from the Director of the Manchester Athenæum to address the meeting, and I shall write by the present post to decline doing so.[1] Indeed, but that I have distinctly engaged myself, I should not have come down at all, for I abominate being bored in this matter. I rely upon your arranging it that I shall not be called upon. . . .

" I have just agreed to write a new story for £1000—not bad for these bad times. I shall want to talk over plots with you—for I start on the 1st of January. I must get once more into harness."

And he did, with brilliant results, for the new romance proved to be his best—*The Lancashire Witches.*

[1] In his letter to the Director of the Athenæum, he declined to address the meeting " on the ground of the nervous embarrassment which I always feel in speaking before a large assemblage."

CHAPTER XIX

"THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES."

BELIEF in Witchcraft—that is to say, the possibility of mortal beings acquiring and wielding supernatural powers, and exercising malign influence over their fellows—seems to have existed in every age and every country since the beginning of human life. The shadowy legends of Mythology, the practices of Pan and his satyrs, and Pagan rites, all helped to swell the cult of dealings with Beelzebub, which, under the generic name of witchcraft, came to maturity in the fifteenth century. Even the mysteries of Christian religion were adapted to its ritual, and, indeed, its doctrinal principles may be defined as an inversion of the tenets of Christianity. Owing to this extraordinary conglomeration of conflicting factors, popular ideas on the subject became very confused; so much so, that the secrecy with which the Waldenses and other proscribed sects were necessarily compelled to hold their religious meetings brought upon them charges of indulging in the unhallowed rites traditionally associated with paganism. Hence, the origin of the term "Witches' Sabbaths," which, in the vulgar belief, witnessed similar horrors as took place in the mysterious conventicles; and the Waldenses were styled "scopaces," because they rode to their meetings on *scopæ*

or brooms in the approved aerial manner of witches! Such was the jumble of ideas in the public mind.

In its earlier days the art of witchcraft was on a higher plane than the usual conception of it; its connection with the science of the Magi and the magicians of Persia gave an atmosphere of wisdom, and consequently the practitioners were generally of high rank. But with succeeding ages, as light and knowledge expanded, witchcraft degenerated as it ceased to be encouraged by the learned and great, until, in the seventeenth century, it became mainly the prerogative of the "old weather-beaten crone, having her chin and her knees meeting for age, walking like a bow, leaning on a staff, hollow-eyed, untoothed, furrowed in her face, having her lips trembling with the palsy . . ." as Harsnet wrote in 1599. It is a moot point why witches have always been in a vast majority over wizards. Certainly the Prince of Darkness seems to have preferred women as his earthly agents, and Sprenger, in his *Malleus Maleficarum*, traces this fact to what he ungallantly terms "their inferiority in mental strength, and the natural wickedness of their hearts." This general belief, handed down from the ancients, that Apollyon finds his best recruits among females, is another feminine grievance that should receive attention at Clement's Inn and Caxton Hall, and be rectified when women get their votes and rights.

Despite the absurdities which characterized witchcraft in its decadence, and the tortures meted out to its presumed practitioners, the subject must ever remain one of fascinating interest to the student, from its intimate connection with the religious beliefs of early humanity and with both the natural and the supernatural world.

It was in this light that Ainsworth regarded it and studied it, with the result that witchcraft—its practices, rites, and traditional powers—became the basis of his greatest romance; for, although not so well known and widely read as some of his other popular books, *The Lancashire Witches* is undoubtedly its author's finest work. This romance of scenery and sorcery—as it may be termed—is a masterpiece of descriptive power, for with supernatural terrors, and a vivid realization of the life and customs of a bygone age, are combined wonderful scenic pictures—the whole being an interpretation of the "atmosphere" of a very remarkable tract of country.

Pendle Hill, in Lancashire, the locality of the story, may be described as a vast mountainous moorland—rocky and barren, though watered by many a stream and tarn. The main portion of the range—something like a great whale in shape—rises to a height of 1830 feet, and, as the old distich says—

> "Ingleborough, Pendle Hill, and Pennygent,
> Are the highest hills between Scotland and Trent."

At the base of the mountain lies a wide, wild tract of uneven land—known as Pendle Forest—bare heaths, rugged rocks, bleak ridges, sombre valleys, and woody ravines through which dash the sullen streams from the hills. The scenery of this weird yet fascinating district is typically suggestive of the supernatural, and wild legends and traditions have from immemorial times been attached to its lonely heights and gloomy glens. It is the Brocken of England. What wonder, then, that in the seventeenth century Pendle attained an unenviable notoriety for witchcraft. Witches' Sabbaths took place

and ghastly rites were practised on its lofty hill, and the whole district was terrorized by the earthly vice-reines of the Evil One; so when James I instituted his campaign against sorcery and magic, the Lancashire witches were especially marked out for retribution. No less than nine persons from Pendle Forest were condemned at the first trial for witchcraft, at Lancaster, in August, 1612. Amongst those executed were Mother Chattox, and her granddaughter, Nance Redfern; Elizabeth Device, and her son and daughter, James and Alizon Device; Katherine Hewyt (known as "Mother Mould-Heels"); and Alice Nutter, wife of Richard Nutter of Rough Lee. Old Mother Demdike died in gaol before her trial. A second trial of Lancashire witches took place in 1633.[1] But traditions of the witches—and even their practices—survived, and Pendle Forest was one of the last districts where belief in witchcraft lingered, mainly from the associations of these trials and the earlier supernatural legends originating, no doubt, from the wild nature of the surrounding scenery. Some belief in the superstition is probably extant still in the lonely countryside of Pendle. Certainly it was sixty years ago, when James Crossley, in his Introduction to the reissue of *Potts's Discoverie of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, by the Chetham Society, wrote:—

"The 'parting genius' of superstition still clings to the hoary hill tops and rugged slopes and mossy water sides, along which the old forest stretched its length,

[1] This case attracted great public attention. A play entitled *The Late Lancashire Witches*, by Heywood and Broome, appeared in 1634, and in 1682 Shadwell wrote *The Lancashire Witches*, wherein Mother Demdike is a character.

and the voices of ancestral tradition are still heard to speak from the depth of its quiet hollows, and along the course of its gurgling streams. He who visits Pendle will yet find that charms are generally resorted to among the lower orders . . . that each small hamlet has its peculiar and gifted personage whom it is dangerous to offend . . . that each locality has its haunted house; that apparitions still walk their ghostly rounds. . . ."

It was Crossley, invaluable friend ever, who suggested to Ainsworth the idea of using *Potts's Discoverie of Witches*—which related to the trial of Demdike, the Devices, and Chattox, etc.[1]—as the groundwork of a romance. The idea was instantly adopted, as for some years Ainsworth had designed writing a book on the subject of witchcraft in Lancashire, in which he could utilize the grand scenery of Pendle Hill, which, of course, appealed to him very strongly both by its wild and romantic nature and its local associated legends. As early as 1845 there is mention of the subject in his letters to Crossley:—

"I have not yet started the *Witches* as I want to commence with effect. . . . Pray see Rodd about Whitaker and the Witchcraft books." Then, in May, 1846, he wrote: "I have some intention of running down into Lancashire to see the Witch Country once more . . . what say you to another trip?" Again, in August, 1847: "I shall soon be in Manchester, as I want to pay another visit to Whalley."

[1] An excellent account of the Lancashire witches—their practices and their trials—has been written by Dr. Laycock, of Sabden-in-Pendle, and issued by *The Burnley Express*.

This long preparation for his work, and his frequent visits to examine in detail the scenery he was to describe, were the causes of the book's success; for he thus had ample time and opportunities to evolve his schemes, and consequently the story did not suffer from haste in construction and composition, as was unfortunately the case with some of his works a few years before.

At last the plan for *The Lancashire Witches* was completed, and Ainsworth accepted the liberal offer of *The Sunday Times* for his new romance to make its first appearance serially in that paper, on the same terms as were arranged for *Old St. Paul's*—£1000 and the copyright to revert to the author on the completion of the work. Accordingly, on 3rd December, 1847, he notified Crossley: "It has been settled that I do *The Lancashire Witches*, so you may look out for the first chapters on New Year's Day." [1] And later on in the same month he wrote: "I shall certainly pay a visit at no distant date to the hills of Pendle, and shall be glad of your company. I hope you will like the opening chapters of the *Witches*. I rather like what I have done myself. You will not at first, perhaps, see what I am driving at, but you will soon find out. Let me have your opinions when you have seen the papers. . . . I congratulate you upon your honourable inheritance from Dr. Holmes. May you long sit in his chair. You should give an inaugural dinner to the worthiest members, and invite me to meet them. . . ."

[1] Ainsworth's was a name to conjure with at the theatres. His story commenced to appear on 1st January, 1848, and two days later a drama entitled *The Lancashire Witches: A Romance of Pendle Forest* was produced at the Adelphi Theatre. An opera was also founded on this romance.

The above concluding sentences refer to Crossley's appointment as President of the Chetham Society. In addition to *Potts's Discoverie of Witches*, Ainsworth made use of another of this society's publications—*Nicholas Assheton's Journal*—for his romance; and in February, 1848, he paid another visit to witch-land. On the 15th he wrote to Crossley: "I have a nice little notice of the Chetham Society and *Worthington's Diary* in type (for *The New Monthly Magazine*). . . . I hope to be able to get away next week, in which case I will run down to Manchester and we will go over to Whalley and Pendle together. . . . I hope you like the *Witches*. They find favour here, and satisfy *The Sunday Times*." And on the 19th he continued: "I am glad you like Nicholas, and I hope he will improve upon acquaintance. I start on my quest on Monday next. . . . I will call at your lodgings in Booth Street on leaving the station. . . . On Tuesday we must start for Whalley, and I doubt not we shall have great fun. I will run down again to see Malkin; but I really cannot delay my explorations. What do you think of Master Potts?"

Ainsworth was now well under way with his romance. Perhaps the best portion of *The Lancashire Witches* is the Prologue. It opens with a preliminary picture of the weird scenery surrounding Pendle Hill, and the kindling of the beacon fires as the signal of the recall to arms, after an armistice, in the Pilgrimage of Grace, in 1536. The Pilgrimage of Grace, it is almost needless to state, was a religious insurrection generated by the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church in England by Henry VIII, and had for its objects the restoration of the Papal supremacy, and restitution to the monastic

establishments of the lands and revenues of which the king had despoiled them.

A mile or so to the south of Pendle Hill was situated the powerful abbey of Whalley, and its abbot, John Paslew, was one of the chief leaders in the Pilgrimage of Grace. Here, then, Ainsworth had a picturesque historical groundwork for the initiation of his story; and, with the most skilful ingenuity, he proceeded to weave his plot—entwining fact with fancy—and from a curse pronounced by Abbot Paslew on the child of a wizard he traced the origin of the Lancashire witches who figure in the later portions of the book.

The descriptions in the Prologue are singularly vivid—the lighting of the beacon fires on Pendle and the surrounding heights and their sudden extinction—the mysterious eruption—the capture of Abbot Paslew and his return to his abbey as a prisoner. Most impressive, too, are the scenes of the Midnight Mass in the Conventual Church, and of the execution of the once proud abbot at the Holehouses. Paslew was a native of Pendle Hill. He was born at Wiswell Hall—a stone mansion at the foot of the mountain—which was in existence until 1895.

Whalley Abbey, wherein much of the action of *The Lancashire Witches* takes place, was one of the most splendid buildings erected by the Cistercian order in England. The monks—ever wise in their choice of a site for their retreats—erected the abbey in a valley surrounded and sheltered by the Lancashire hills. It stood on the banks of the river Calder, and beyond rose the lofty, green eminence of Whalley Nab—clothed to its very summit with trees. An exquisite spot indeed, and one

which might share Byron's description of his own beautiful Newstead :—

" An old, old monastery . . .
. . . it lies perhaps a little low,
Because the monks preferr'd a hill behind
To shelter their devotion from the wind.
It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,
Crown'd by high woodlands. . . .
. . . A river, which its softened way did take
In currents through the calmer waters spread
Around : the wild fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed :
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fix'd upon the flood."

And its fate was very similar to that of Newstead, for, after the execution of Abbot Paslew and the expulsion of the monks, Whalley Abbey fell into secular hands, and became the residence of a branch of the Assheton family ; and just as the Black Friar haunted the Byrons at Newstead, the interloping Asshetons were troubled by the shade of Abbot Paslew, who—having been a Cistercian—appeared as a White Friar. So Whalley Abbey was haunted, wailing cries were heard, and a ghostly, white-robed figure flitted along the cloisters and through the galleries of its aforetime abode.

These, then, were the conditions, about 1612, which Ainsworth utilized for the opening of the second portion of his romance—Whalley Abbey in the occupation of the descendants of the Assheton who had figured in the Prologue as the conqueror of Abbot Paslew (on the failure of the Pilgrimage of Grace), and the said Abbot metamorphosed into a most delightful ghost, with a malign influence upon his enemy's family. And, to pass from reputed facts to the romancer's fancies, by the clever

arrangement of the plot, the descendants of the child cursed by Abbot Paslew seventy odd years before had become The Lancashire Witches, pursuing their unholy courses on Pendle Hill and incidentally working much ill to members of the Assheton family. Admirable use Ainsworth made of the materials at his disposal.

After a charming picture of May-Day sports and customs in Whalley village—a subject he excelled in, for no chronicler ever delighted more in the pastimes of Merrie England—he next described the members of the Assheton family and the appearance of the Abbey during their occupation. At the period in question, 1612, the monastic buildings and exquisite Conventual Church still existed in a picturesque state of decay, and formed a fitting scene for the events the author wished to introduce. In the former Banqueting-Hall of the Abbots, he revelled in the details of a seventeenth-century feast—the great dishes of baked red deer, the venison pasties, the sack possets, the goblets of canary; followed by an animated picture of the merry-making and old English dances then in vogue—the couranto, the cushion dance, and the brawl. How real he makes it all; this scene of life and manners in the long-vanished past is *alive.* Ainsworth was always at his best in descriptions of this kind. He was a profound antiquarian, and introduced his old-world knowledge into his romances in the most agreeable manner.

Whalley Abbey has changed considerably since the date of Ainsworth's story. About the middle of the seventeenth century the remainder of the beautiful Conventual Church was razed to the ground; its exquisite

WHALLEY ABBEY—EAST FRONT AND RUINS OF THE ABBOT'S ORATORY.
From a view by Mr. R. P. Gregson, F.R.P.S.

choir stalls (with wonderful Miserere carvings) are now in Whalley Parish Church—an ancient and remarkably interesting building, which remains much as Ainsworth described it. Here is the grave of John Paslew, last Abbot of the adjoining abbey; and in the churchyard are the three curious Crosses of Paulinus, which date from the seventh century. But Whalley Abbey, what is left of it, still presents a very picturesque appearance. There are the two great Gateways; the Domus Conversorum; and the ruins of the Fratry, Penitentiary, and Chapter House, etc. The Abbot's House, erected by Paslew about 1507, with some modern additions, forms a very desirable residence. On the north front is the fine exterior Elizabethan stone staircase; and on the east, the Abbot's Oratory (where the ghost of Paslew was most frequently seen), with its beautiful tracery windows, forms an ideal ruin. To the rear are the ruins of the Banqueting-Hall (or Long Gallery), the scene of so many of the incidents, supernatural and otherwise, in *The Lancashire Witches.*

The romantic charm of the whole group of buildings and ruins beside the river Calder, with the tree-feathered heights of Whalley Nab beyond, is intense, and Ainsworth realized it to the full. During one of his visits to Whalley, he stayed at a cottage (known as Bridge House) opposite the Avenue entrance to the Abbey, near the bridge over the Calder, and under the shadow of the beautiful wooded hill of which he wrote to Crossley—"I *will* make something of Whalley Nab." This was in March, 1848, when he also said to his old friend: "I am really glad you like Mother Chattox. The fact of having seen Whalley I find of great service to me. . . . It is

cheering to learn you like the Tale, and I hope to do better as I get on."

In the third part of *The Lancashire Witches*, the action is transferred from Whalley to Pendle Forest; and, step by step with his narrative, Ainsworth vividly pictures the changing scenery as his characters journey from the rich, wooded lands of Read Hall, through the wild and romantic Boggart's Glen, with its black and gloomy stream o'erhung by thick timber (this is a fine example of the author's power in describing the terrible in Nature), to the bare and sad little hamlet of Sabden—lying alone amid the stillness of the bleak, grey hill-land all around it. Sabden suggests a lost village; no one passes through it, for it leads to nowhere except the almost inaccessible heights of Pendle Hill. Equally remote and lonely is the next scene described in the book—"Bess's o' th' Booth," the hostelry in the tiny village of Newchurch-in-Pendle (or Goldshaw, as Ainsworth calls it). Here, perched high on the precipitate hill-side by the church, is the graveyard whence Mother Chattox procured the necessary ingredients for her unholy rites. Adjoining is the stone vicarage-house, where Ainsworth stayed—with the incumbent at that time, Archdeacon Rushton—when he was collecting the material for this part of *The Lancashire Witches* and absorbing and realizing the "atmosphere" of the Pendle country.[1] Newchurch commands grand views of range after range of Lancashire hills and

[1] The late vicar of Newchurch-in-Pendle, the Rev. J. H. Horrox, initiated a project for erecting a Memorial Window or Clock in the church to the memory of Ainsworth, "The Lancashire Novelist," and received encouraging promises of financial help. Unfortunately, Mr. Horrox died, under sad circumstances, in 1905, and the scheme has not been proceeded with since.

cloughs, and the vast landscape, as I saw it, illumined by the golden blaze of a splendid sunset in summer time, presented a glorious spectacle indeed. Very different must be the scene in winter, when storms and the black wings of night sweep over the desolate hills.

From Newchurch, a steep, rough path (called " Jenny Lane ") leads down the hill-side to the banks of the riveret, Pendle Water, which falls in picturesque cascades along its rocky channel. The narrow road running by the edge of this stream through the glen brings the adventurous traveller to a bridge and inn—and then Rough Lee. This " stern, sombre-looking mansion, built of a dark grey stone, with tall square chimneys, and windows with heavy mullions "—as Ainsworth wrote—looks indeed " formed to hide dark and guilty deeds." The situation of the house in a secluded vale, with steep hills frowning down on all sides, is inexpressibly solitary ; but it must be confessed that Ainsworth, with the vivid imagination of the skilled romancer, somewhat enhanced the gloom and scenic terrors of the spot : the scenery is more like that of a Derbyshire dale. Very realistic, nevertheless, are his descriptions of the surroundings of the fearsome abode of Alice Nutter, who, though born a daughter of the powerful family of Assheton, was burnt at the stake, as a witch, in 1612. But, as related in Ainsworth's story, Alice Nutter had a lawsuit with Squire Roger Nowell, of Read Hall, concerning the boundaries of their respective estates ; and in those days of rabid superstition a sure and easy way of removing a successful opponent was to raise the terrible charge of witchcraft—so difficult to disprove and so abhorred by all men, who took their cue from the Royal Witch-

hunter, James I. In all probability, therefore, Alice Nutter was a victim of the prevailing mania, which was successfully excited against her to aid a private quarrel. Rough Lee was the patrimony of her husband, Richard Nutter, who, it was of course alleged, came by his death through the wicked enchantments of his wife. Still visible on the south wall of Rough Lee is the inscription : " This house was builded by M. N. [Miles Nutter] in the year of our Lord 1585." The former large mansion is now much reduced in size, and what remains is subdivided into humble tenements. But the heavy stone-mullioned windows, the huge raftered kitchen, and other features, give a conception of its original appearance.

On the further slope of the high, conical-shaped hill, which shuts in the Rough Lee glen to the north-east, stood—not far from the old road to Gisburn—Malkin Tower. This ancient circular stronghold, dating from Anglo-Saxon times, was the very heart and centre—the head-quarters, so to speak—of the Lancashire Witches :—

> " Malkin's Tower . . . where
> Report makes caitiff witches meet to swear
> Their homage to the devil, and contrive
> The deaths of men and beasts."

Its isolated position on this remote, rocky, " blasted heath " of the English Brocken, rendered it a fitting scene for the Sabbaths, Walpurgis Nights, ghastly revels, and unholy rites of the impious crew whose leader,—the most frightful and malicious of them all—old Mother Demdike, lived in Malkin Tower itself. It is unnecessary to describe here the history and appearance of the structure, which is fully given in *The Lancashire Witches.*[1] It

[1] Book II, Chapters VI, XI, XII, etc.

will suffice to state that the original building no longer exists, and that the place called by the same name, on another part of Pendle Hill, is not the Malkin Tower of Mother Demdike and *The Lancashire Witches*. There is some doubt as to the meaning and origin of the word Malkin, Malking, Malkyn, or Mawking, as the witnesses at the trial of the witches variously described it. Johnson, on Shaksperean authority, defines "malkin" as "a dirty wench"; and the word is in use in East Anglian dialect to the present day with the same meaning—or, rather, it is applied more particularly to a wild or bold, strangely-dressed female, such a figure as a gipsy or the conventional conception of a witch presents. James Crossley thought malkin was derived from the Scotch for "a hare"—witches, according to legend, being much addicted to transforming themselves into this branch of the rodent tribe for purposes of swift escape when pursued by their enemies. But probably Ainsworth's relation of the local legend, deducing the name from "grimalkin"—"an old cat"—is the correct solution: "On stormy nights a huge black cat, with flaming eyes, was frequently descried on the summit of the structure, whence it obtained its name of Grimalkin, or Malkin Tower."

For some occult reason, poor puss has always been assigned the dubious rôle of inseparable concomitant of witches. The superstition may have originated from the cat's luminous eyes ("the cat with eyne of burning coal," as Shakspere says) and the electric sparks emitted from its fur, which would naturally suggest magic in the credulous, ignorant days of eld; and the noiseless, rapid, stealthy movements, the tenacity of life, the nocturnal

assemblies, and the weird cries of the cat tribe would all conduce to mystery and a suggestion of supernatural powers. Or the tradition may have come from Egypt, where both felis and necromancy flourished. Whatever the reason, the "familiars" — demon servants — of witches generally took the form of a black cat, like "Tib" in *The Lancashire Witches;* and at the trial, in 1612, of the witches who figure in Ainsworth's book, one of the witnesses deposed in the quaint phraseology of the time: "This Examinate heard a foule yelling like unto a great number of Cattes. . . . And he further sayth that about three nights after that, about midnight of the same, there came a thing, and lay upon him very heauily aboute an houre, and went then from him out of his Chamber window, coloured blacke, and about the bignesse of a Hare or Catte."

Now, this is all most unkind as applied to the "Catte" —our useful mice-executioner and cosy companion of the fireside—and to describe the plaintive melodies of the feline night-wanderer as "a foule yelling" is distinctly libellous.

As already stated, *The Lancashire Witches* was based on an official report, issued in 1613, entitled *The Discoverie of Witches in the County of Lancaster,* by Master Thomas Potts—"clerk in court, and present at the trial" —who figures so amusingly as a witch-hunter in Ainsworth's book. A comparison of the two works will demonstrate how skilfully Ainsworth grasped the salient, but rather meagre, facts of the early record and elaborated and transformed them into the vivid drama he evolved amid the remarkable scenery of Pendle Hill. In Potts's work, Alice Nutter, Mother Chattox, Mother Demdike,

and the Devices are merely names : but in Ainsworth's romance they *live*—real characters whose evil potentialities, it can be realized, were believed in and dreaded by their superstitious contemporaries.

There is, of course, some considerable degree of author's license (as, of necessity, in every romance) in *The Lancashire Witches*, particularly in the delineation of Alizon Device, who was adapted to figure as the unfortunate heroine of the book. She was not the daughter of Alice Nutter, but of Elizabeth Device, and was granddaughter of Mother Demdike ; and she was, in reality, one of the witches executed in 1612. Her sister, Jennet Device, with her strange malformation of the eyes, was a much more faithful portrait in the story.

During the composition of his romance, Ainsworth continued to pay flying visits to Lancashire in order to realize and correctly describe the scenery he was introducing. He was there in April, 1848, and came again in May, on purpose to see the wild country round Rough Lee and Malkin Tower. He wrote to Crossley on the 3rd :—

" I start to-morrow, Thursday, by the first train, and hope to be in Manchester before two o'clock. . . . I shall go to Burnley by the 5 o'clock train. I sincerely hope you may be able to accompany me. I shall return to Manchester on Saturday, and shall be glad to have a *tête-à-tête* dinner with you on that day at six o'clock. . . . Don't ask anyone to meet me." And in September, returning from Edinburgh, he notified the friend who was naturally so deeply interested in the book : " I shall be in Manchester, I hope, about 5 o'clock to-morrow (30th). . . . Will you go with me to Hoghton Tower on Sunday ? "

At the opening of the fourth portion of *The Lancashire Witches* the scene changes to Downham, on the north side of the Pendle country. Here, the fertile lands watered by the Ribble offer a vastly different prospect to the wild, barren region of Pendle Forest but a mile or two away—for abrupt changes in the character of the scenery abound in this district of Lancashire.

Downham — most delightful of villages — with its Church, Hall, beck, picturesque inn and cottages, and ancient stocks, nestles on the side of a woody acclivity, separated by a verdant valley from the far loftier eminence of Pendle Hill, which here presents a grand and majestic aspect—rising, ridge after ridge, till the green, rounded summit meets the clouds which sail around it. Downham Hall, commanding this splendid prospect, was a fitting residence for the jolly, sporting squire, Nicholas Assheton, who was so devotedly attached to Pendle Hill: "'I love Pendle Hill,' cried Nicholas, enthusiastically; 'and from whatever side I view it—whether from this place (Read), where I see it from end to end, from its lowest point to its highest; from Padiham, where it frowns upon me; from Clitheroe, where it smiles; or from Downham, where it rises in full majesty before me —from all points and under all aspects, whether robed in mist or radiant with sunshine, I delight in it. . . . There is no hill in England like Pendle Hill.'"

Nicholas Assheton, with his good-nature and his venial sins, is perhaps Ainsworth's most successful bit of character drawing; for the latter, with no other aid than Nicholas's Journal,[1] has made the seventeenth-century squire alive again, a man in the habit as—we may pre-

[1] Published by the Chetham Society.

sume—he lived. Nicholas Assheton's descendants still reside in Downham Hall; but the house is not as he knew it, for it was practically rebuilt in the eighteenth century. Adjoining the Hall grounds is the Church, which contains some of the bells originally at Whalley Abbey. When, as previously related, Whalley Abbey was despoiled and given to the Assheton family, in 1537, several of the bells were sent to Downham Church; and there is a romantic local legend to the effect that, in the dead of the night, shepherds on Pendle Hill hear the low chime of distant bells—"the Monks' Bells"—pealing softly across the valley, still calling, as of old, the white-robed brethren to prayer and the midnight vigil. It is a pretty fancy, and Pendle Hill preserves many such links with its past history.[1]

This subtle combination of history with the influences of impressive scenery, and a belief in occult powers, is the secret of Pendle Hill's arresting charm: Ainsworth solved it, and adding that inimitable romantic glamour so essentially his gift, produced a book which is a visible interpretation of the forces of nature, both seen and unseen. Most skilfully, too, did the romancer utilize these forces as agencies in achieving his most forcible effects. Thus, the vivid pictures of storms—the thunder rumbling hollowly among the hills—the lightning illuminating some ruined tower or lonely waste—attune the mind of the reader to the sombre key necessary for the terrible or supernatural events that are about to be enacted.

The supernatural is, of course, prominent throughout *The Lancashire Witches*, and rarely has it been used so

[1] A full account of the hill and its associations will be found in James Mackay's *Pendle Hill in History and Literature*.

impressively in a romance. An effective ghost story is a very difficult thing to write, for the range of incident is limited and the risk of the absurd is ever near. But Ainsworth, from his sincere belief in the occult and spirit world, was remarkably successful in obtaining his preternatural effects; under his hands we are pleasantly thrilled—the unreal seems real, and the eyes of scepticism lose their keenness at the wave of the magic wand of the romancer. In particular, the phantom abbot at Whalley Abbey is a ghostly triumph; and the weird scene of the Witches' Nocturnal Meeting in the ruined Conventual Church of the Abbey is singularly powerful. This last is also of great archæological value; for here the author has preserved the superstitions of witchcraft, and his descriptions of its rites and practices were the fruit of his researches in the bypaths of forgotten lore. Thus, the lyrical incantations in *The Lancashire Witches* will be found to be similar in form and metre to those used by the witches in *Macbeth;* and in all probability both Shakspere and Ainsworth were indebted to the same old records of magic for the horrible ingredients cast into their respective caldrons by the witches of the "blasted heath" and of Pendle Hill. For example:—

SHAKSPERE	AINSWORTH
	Head of monkey, brain of cat,
Fillet of a fenny snake,	Eye of weasel, tail of rat:
In the caldron boil and bake:	. . . .
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,	Skull of ape and fierce baboon,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog.	And panther spotted like the moon.
. . . .	. . . .
Liver of blaspheming Jew;	Here is foam from a mad dog's lips,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew,	

Silver'd in the moon's eclipse;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips.
. . . .
Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

Gather'd beneath the moon's eclipse,
Ashes of a shroud consumed
And with deadly vapour fumed.
These within the mess I cast—
Stir the caldron—stir it fast!

It is interesting to note, by the way, that Shakspere's description of witchcraft rites was, no doubt, due to the topical prominence of the subject at the time he was writing *Macbeth*, about 1606. Ben Jonson, too, devoted much attention to the subject, and in his *Masque of Queens* preserved all the classic superstitions of the fell art.[1] These plays were written when the Lancashire witches were in full force and bringing Pendle Hill into universal notoriety; belief in the powers of these women was general all over the country; and no one was more credulous than the King, who was just about instituting his crusade of witchfinding, which brought to the stake those characters who figure in Ainsworth's romance as addicted to the cult of the caldron, cat, and broomstick.

From Downham the action of *The Lancashire Witches*, for the first time, leaves the Pendle country and passes to Middleton Hall, between Manchester and Rochdale, the seat of another branch of the Assheton family. Next comes the striking narration of the wild, terrific scenery of the Gorge of Cliviger. This gloomy ravine between Todmorden and Burnley was once the abiding-place of wolves, birds of prey, and boggarts, who have long since been terrified and ousted from their haunts by the roar

[1] Many of the Elizabethan dramatists make frequent allusion to witchcraft; see Middleton, Dekker, etc.

and scream of the modern railway which now runs through Cliviger's Gorge.

The remaining portion of the book is mostly concerned with Hoghton Tower, the picturesque mansion crowning the summit of a richly wooded hill rising in isolated pride from the plain of beautiful country east of Preston. The De Hoghton family have been seated here since the reign of Stephen. Ainsworth described the domain as it appeared in the time of the first baronet, in 1617, when King James I visited Hoghton ; but with a romancer's license he antedated this event by five years to fit in with his story, and he thus was enabled to present a vivid picture of the splendid hunting-parties, banquets, and masques which took place at Hoghton in honour of the King's visit.[1] Here Ainsworth was in his glory, and his descriptions of gastronomical and sartorial wonders rivalled the similar presentments of customs and modes of a bygone age in his earlier books of *The Tower of London* period. He also introduced the tradition of how King James knighted the loin of beef which had given him satisfaction at Hoghton, and bestowed upon it the title of " Sir-Loin "—which, however, was but a doubtful compliment to the juicy joint, for from a baron of beef it descended to the rank of knight.

[1] Hoghton Tower is one of the best examples of a sixteenth-century mansion in England. At the time he was writing *The Lancashire Witches*, Ainsworth regretted the decay of Hoghton and its abandonment by the owners : had he been living now, he would rejoice at the complete restoration of the Tower, which forms the residence of the present baronet, Sir James de Hoghton. At the marriage of Miss Dorothy de Hoghton, in 1908, twenty little girls were present as the representatives of the modern " Lancashire Witches," wearing the traditional cloaks and black conical hats, like those of their very different predecessors who figured so prominently in Ainsworth's romance.

After the merrymakings at Hoghton, a rapid transition takes place, and the author ends his book on a tragic note. And appropriately so; for, in spite of jocund interludes, tragedy and terror ever influence and attend the main incidents of the narrative.

The composition of *The Lancashire Witches* occupied Ainsworth just a year, for he wrote to Crossley on 18th December, 1848: "Owing to my time being so closely occupied with the completion of my Romance, I have had no leisure whatever to attend to the Magazines, and I cannot leave town for a day till they are disposed of. . . . A copy of the book shall be sent you as soon as ready. I am now in all the agonies of winding up."

About the time *The Lancashire Witches* completed its serial appearance in *The Sunday Times*, Ainsworth had a few copies of the story printed off from the newspaper type, and these, bound in a folio volume with pages of two columns, he presented to his own friends; this was the first edition, and it is now exceedingly scarce. The second (and first public) edition, in three volumes, was published early in 1849 by Colburn; it was without illustrations, and its market value to-day—about £5—refutes the erroneous and rather general impression that early editions of Ainsworth's works are valuable mainly on account of the plates furnished by Cruikshank or other artists. It is, indeed, deeply to be regretted that Cruikshank was not engaged to illustrate *The Lancashire Witches;* it was a work entirely in sympathy with his own weird genius, and the gloomy scenes on Pendle Hill, the Witches' Sabbaths with their horrible rites, the terrors of Malkin Tower, and the mysteries and apparitions of Whalley Abbey, would all have given him

splendid opportunities for exercising his elfin fancies and imaginative skill in picturing the sombre and terrible. However, it was not to be; and the book was not illustrated until the third edition, which appeared in 1854, when Sir John Gilbert furnished twelve designs. These are good, particularly the two depicting "The Incantation," and "The Phantom Monk." A later edition of this romance, published by John Dicks, contains six clever illustrations by Paul Hardy.

The Lancashire Witches was naturally dedicated to the old and invaluable friend who had been intimately concerned with the origin of the story:—[1]

"To JAMES CROSSLEY, ESQ., (of Manchester,) President of the Chetham Society, and the learned editor of *The Discoverie of Witches in the County of Lancaster*—The Groundwork of the Following Pages—This Romance, undertaken at his suggestion, is inscribed by his old and sincerely attached friend, THE AUTHOR."

And to Crossley, Ainsworth wrote on 2nd January, 1849:—

"I am glad you like *The Lancashire Witches* in a complete form, and I am happy also to learn that the Dedication pleases you. I was unable to write the Dedicatory Epistle I intended, owing to pressure of time, but I shall give it in the Illustrated Edition. I have much to say about you. Really, I think the book looks very well."

Very well, in every particular, must be the verdict of

[1] Crossley also had a long family connection with the localities of the book, for he was directly descended from Edward Crossley de Cliviger, of the sixteenth century, and his ancestors for generations lived at Burnley and Colne.

all those who have read this wonderful romance, the best example of its author's powers.

In conclusion, *The Lancashire Witches* illustrates most completely those temperamental predilections of Ainsworth which so strongly dominated his literary work, for, as one of his contemporary critics justly observed :—

" His romances yield evidence, in a thousand particulars, that his temperament is exquisitely sensitive, not less of the horrible than of the beautiful. We have it in those landscapes coloured variously with the glow of Claude and the gloom of Salvator Rosa—in those lyrics gay as the songs of the Tyrol, or ghastly as the incantations of the Brocken ; but still more in those creations, peopling the one and chaunting the other, homely some of them as the models of Ostade; and others wild as the wildest dreams of Fuseli." [1]

[1] *The Sun*, 2nd August, 1852 ; probably written by Charles Kent.

CHAPTER XX

"MERVYN CLITHEROE." "THE STAR CHAMBER." REMOVAL TO BRIGHTON. CHANGES.

WE must now revert briefly to Ainsworth's correspondence with Crossley, to whom he writes in February and March, 1848 :—

"All sorts of rumours are flying about here. It is said that Louis Philippe is dead, our Indian Mail burnt, and the British flag pulled down from the Embassy. . . . I fear Guizot is taken. It is also said that Lamartine is shot."

From exaggerated reports anent the Revolution in France, he passes to some interesting comments on topical matters at home :—

"So it appears poor Cottingham Moss died of hydrophobia. I wish you could see Gilbert Winter, and tell him that Mr. Pettigrew, the surgeon, who has made this mysterious subject his particular study, declares positively that if the part bitten be *cut out*, even an hour before the symptoms come on, the patient can be saved ; but after the disease is manifested, nothing can save him. Tell G. W. this, because I believe one of the young Mosses was bitten at the same time as poor Cottingham, and it is most important that everything should be done for his preservation. *Dombey* is disgustingly bad—disgusting is the word, and, as you say, Carker never dared

to show his teeth once after the Man in the Moon. Still nothing but the Revolution—nobody talks of anything but this all engrossing subject. . . . The next number of *The New Monthly* will contain an article of high interest on the subject of Guizot, based on information obtained directly from him . . . the details will therefore be authentic."

"*January*, 1849.

"On Sunday I go to Brighton with Forster to dine with Bulwer, and remain over Monday. . . . If you are in town, you had better go to Brighton with me and Forster, and we can make up some dinner on Monday. How say you? A Happy New Year to you!"

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE.

"On Friday, Mr. and Miss Ebers dine here; and I hope you will dine with me too. . . . I will give you a glass of good old port and a haunch of Welsh mutton. I will drive you out if you will call for me at the Garrick Club at ½ past 2 o'clock . . . and you can return by the omnibus or with Mr. Ebers."

Dinner and port always loomed prominently in the daily curriculum of the Early Victorians—sometimes with untoward consequences! Thus, a few months later, Ainsworth and Crossley had a very brief potatory misunderstanding; its origin was absurd, and the matter is only alluded to here to demonstrate, by the following letter, on what a firm and faithful foundation this remarkable friendship stood:—

"*June 28th*, 1849.

"MY DEAR CROSSLEY,

"I am very glad to receive your letter, which sets all right between us. A friendship like ours ought

not to be lightly interrupted ; and I sincerely hope never may be interrupted. But in regard to the expression on which the dispute arose, I really must beg you to understand that I used it, as I conceived, most complimentarily to yourself, and I was equally surprised and hurt at the annoyance you exhibited. Nothing but the best and kindliest feeling towards you animated me ; and I now only enter into this explanation that you may not imagine I could, for a moment, underrate your high acquirements, for which no man has a profounder respect than myself. As to putting myself into any sort of competition with you, I never, even when inflamed with wine, could be guilty of a thought so absurd. I well know the great powers you possess ; and I only regret that the world does not know them equally well ; and that you have not obtained the eminent position for learning and letters to which you are so well entitled. But apart from all this—apart from literary distinction—it is as the man and the friend that I chiefly esteem you ; and I beseech you, when we do sit down together again over cups, perhaps too deep and too frequent, not to let any dinner expression breed a moment's discord between us.

" Always your sincerely attached
" W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

During 1848 *The New Monthly* presented Cyrus Redding's interesting *Reminiscences of Thomas Campbell ;* and in *Ainsworth's Magazine,* from 1848–50, the editor reprinted his *Crichton, Guy Fawkes,* and *Lancashire Witches.* There was also a translation of George Sand's *Countess de Rudolstadt.* Soon after, Ainsworth secured a magazine prize in the shape of Surtees' amusing work, *Mr. Soapey Sponge's Sporting Tour,* which made its first appearance in *The New Monthly* during 1849–51. But

about this time he lost a valued contributor by the death of Horace Smith, to whose daughter he wrote :—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,
"*13th July*, 1849.

"MY DEAR MISS SMITH,

"I am indeed profoundly grieved to hear of your excellent father's death, for, as you truly say, I had a strong attachment to him ; and though I would offer you all the consolation in my power on the afflicting occasion, I feel it to be almost futile. To us all he is a great loss—but to his family the blow must be most severe. A better or kinder man I never knew ; and the place he has made vacant in society and letters can never be filled up again. God bless you, my dear Miss Smith, and may you and your mother and sisters be supported in this trying time. Pray offer my heartfelt condolences to them, and believe me most truly yours,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

It will be recollected that twenty-three years earlier, Horace Smith's *Brambletye House* and Ainsworth's *Sir John Chiverton* were read by Sir Walter Scott on his journey to London, and produced those cogitations on his "imitators" previously quoted.[1]

In April, 1849, Ainsworth visited Manchester ; and from thence went on to Liverpool, to attend a banquet given in his honour by the Mayor. In September he went abroad for nearly three months. To his daughters he writes :—

"NO. 1. HOTEL WINDSOR, RUE RIVOLI, PARIS.
"*3rd Sept.*, 1849.

". . . I crossed, as I intended, from Newhaven to Dieppe, and had a pleasant passage. There were some

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 145.

agreeable people on board—amongst others Sir Bellingham Graham, and Col. Shelburne Hodgson, with the latter of whom I passed a good deal of my time at Dieppe. Dieppe amused me very well for two days, and then I proceeded to Rouen, where I slept at our old hotel, and next day took the train to Havre. There I put up at the *Bains Frascati*, and enjoyed myself extremely, bathing twice a day. . . . I remained at Havre till Sunday, and then came here. Paris is very full of English, and when I went to dine at the *Trois Frères* yesterday, Thackeray sat at the next table to me, so we dined together.[1] There are two barristers here—friends of mine—Mr. Coulson and Mr. Knowles, and we dine together to-day. . . . The house is very full—the landlord was rejoiced to see me. . . . I have got my old room—No. 1—and am most comfortable. So Manning [2] is taken; I am very glad of it. . . ."

[1] Thackeray, writing to Mrs. Brookfield, also on 3rd September, 1849, mentioned meeting Ainsworth and dining with him at *Les Trois Frères*. Thackeray had lately achieved fame with *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis;* and so he wrote of his old friend in rather an unpleasant, superior manner—saying that Ainsworth showed a friendly disposition and a desire to forgive him his success, but that he (Thackeray), beyond a good-humoured acquiescence in the other's goodwill, did not care. Possibly Thackeray's complacent attitude was encouraged by the ingenuous adulation of his correspondent, who was wont to extol him in the manner of Richardson's fair devotees. In her reply to this particular letter from Thackeray, Mrs. Brookfield related how she and "Uncle Hallam" met Ainsworth in Venice, and while eating ices together in the Place St. Mark discussed the author of *Vanity Fair;* also how she praised Thackeray and his "affectionate nature," which remark, "pretending not to hear," Ainsworth made her repeat about three times, so that the lady felt she had "thrown pearls before swine"—which elegant metaphor she crowned with her suspicion that Ainsworth might be jealous of Thackeray as an author, "ludicrously presumptuous" though it would be.

[2] Frederick and Maria Manning, the murderers of Patrick O'Connor, whose body they tried to destroy with quicklime, fled respectively to Jersey and Edinburgh; but by means of the electric telegraph, then newly brought into use, they were promptly arrested. The Mannings were executed in November, 1849.

Ainsworth proceeded via Bordeaux to Spain; and during this part of his tour he wrote to Miss (Horace) Smith:—

"CASA CORDERA, MADRID,

"*September 25th*, 1849.

"Though absent I must not forget business at home, and therefore I beg to enclose a cheque for £5. 5. for the October portion of the *Posthumous* (alas!) *Memoir*,[1] which you will be kind enough to give to Mrs. Smith with my best regards.

"I am here, as you will see, in the land loved by Ford,[2] and in the Capital much and deservedly abused by him. I have seen lots of Muleteers, and many a fair señora in her mantilla. This is the country where eyes are at once brilliant and tender, and one has need to be upon one's guard to withstand their witchery. I have seen the wonderful Escurial, and many other things beside; but I have *not* seen (as yet) a bull-fight. . . . I am going further south on Thursday, the 27th, into Andalusia[3] . . . returning by Marseilles. Early in November I hope to see you all again in Brighton. . . . I am sorry the Spanish Postal Authorities will not allow me to prepay my letter. *Adios!*"

Again in England, Ainsworth wrote to Crossley:—

"*November 21st*, 1849.

"About a fortnight ago I returned from one of the pleasantest tours I have ever taken. In the course of it,

[1] Horace Smith's *Posthumous Memoir of Myself*, which was appearing in *The New Monthly Magazine* at the time of his death.

[2] Author of *A Handbook for Spain*.

[3] If Ainsworth went to San Roque, near Gibraltar, he might have seen some familiar pictures, for G. J. Cayley, in his *Bridle Roads of Spain*, notes in March, 1852: "On reaching Macrea's Hotel . . . I had just strength remaining to go round the room and rejoice with patriotic eye over the truly British prints with which the walls were hung, principally sporting pieces and illustrations of Harrison Ainsworth's romances."

I visited the South of France, the Pyrenees, and traversed the whole length, if not the breadth, of Spain. And what a country is Spain! How different from the rest of Europe. You, who are sitting drowsily and dreamily by your fireside, full of port and prejudice, cannot conceive what worlds of new ideas are open to you, if you could but quit your jog-trot life and go abroad for a couple of months. But go to Spain—go and drink *Val de peñas* in La Mancha, and *Xeres* at its own vineyard. As to La Mancha, it is unaltered since the days of Cervantes. You see the very windmills that excited the doughty knight's ire, and the draw-well by which he watered. And then to pass through the defiles of the Morena, with the chance of being robbed. Would not that excite you! I got as far as Gibraltar, and then came home by sea, touching at all the famous towns on the coast—Malaga, Alicante, Cartagena, Almeria, Valencia, and Barcelona. Of all these places, as well as of Cordova, Seville, and Cadiz, I must give you some account soon, when I hope to see you.

"If I can manage it, I will run down to Manchester for a few days at the beginning of next month. . . ."

The following letter is to G. P. R. James, the novelist:—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,

"*November 14th*, 1849.

"MY DEAR JAMES,

"Anything I can do for you at any time you know you may command, and I shall only be too happy in the opportunity of making kindly mention in *The New Monthly Magazine* of your *Dark Scenes of History*. The times are not propitious to us veterans, and literature generally has within the last two years suffered a tremendous depreciation. Magazine property has sunk 40 or 50 per cent. . . .

"Do you know, I took it into my head you were the

author of *Jane Eyre*, but I have altered my opinion since I read a portion of *Shirley*.[1] Currer Bell, whoever he or she may be, has certainly got some of your 'trick,' and I began to think you were coming upon us in fresh and more questionable shape. But *Shirley* has again perplexed me.

"I hope when next in town you will come and dine with me. It will really delight me to see you. . . .

"Ever cordially yours,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

At the end of 1849, the author, via Chapman and Hall, commenced the issue of a cheap collected edition of his works, and the sale was tremendous, proving that Ainsworth had by no means lost his popularity with the reading public: "*Rookwood* promises wonders," he wrote to Charles Ollier; "nearly 6000 were subscribed in the City alone yesterday; this exclusive of agents, etc., which will treble that amount. *Windsor Castle* was worked off during my absence in Spain, and I had not observed the vexatious error into which the accursed printer had fallen, until you called my attention to it. It should be 1657[2]—and is so given in the edition of the romance from which your copy was printed. What a pest those readers are! I have written to have the date corrected: but twenty thousand copies will contain this error."

At first, there was some difficulty in including *The*

[1] *Shirley* was issued in the previous month, October, 1849. The Brontë novels were all favourably reviewed, on their first appearance, in Ainsworth's magazines. *Wuthering Heights* was described as "terrific."

[2] This misprint of 1677 for 1657, at the end of Chapter III, Book III of *Windsor Castle*, seems to have been perpetrated in all subsequent editions.

Tower of London in the new collected edition. Five years before, in 1844, Ainsworth had leased, so to speak, the copyright of this work (and Cruikshank that of his stereotype plates) to Henry Bohn, the publisher, for £200 ; and the agreement stipulated that the *ulterior* copyright of the letterpress remained with the author. The precise term involved by the ambiguous word " ulterior " caused a dispute between Ainsworth and Bohn, for the latter claimed that the copyright was his as long as the stereotype plates for the illustrations lasted ! Ainsworth details the progress of this dispute, and its final settlement, in the following letters to Crossley :—

" *December* 10*th*, 1849.

" I want to have your carefully considered opinion upon my agreement with Bohn. I send you a copy, with the opinions upon it of Chitty, Talfourd, and Fitzroy Kelly. . . . Either I must effect an amicable arrangement with Bohn, or publish in defiance of him. It will not do to give him, at the outside, more than £100 for the right to print or to settle the matter. . . . Bohn has been calling on Chapman and Hall to inquire whether I have any intention of bringing out ' his ' *Tower of London*, and talking largely of ' Chancery.' . . . About *six* years, you will observe, have elapsed since the sale was made to Bohn ; and it is quite clear if he is to enjoy the copyright as long as stereotype plates will last, *no* ' ulterior ' copyright can ever accrue, for they never wear out. . . . Bohn is a notoriously litigious man. The time for reprinting seems to have arrived, as I am now publishing a cheap collective edition of my books, so that there is an evident reason for the republication of *The Tower*. . . . *Windsor Castle* has sold extremely well." [1]

[1] Thirty thousand copies of this book were disposed of in a short time, and all the works enjoyed a very large sale.

"*February 22nd*, 1850.

"You will be glad to learn that I have arranged about *The Tower* with Bohn. I have got it entirely out of his hands after a long and troublesome negotiation, in which he played as many slippery tricks as an eel. I gave him £300 for the copyright, plates, and stereotype plates. He was offered, he says, £500 by the Parlour Library people, Sims and McIntyre, and no doubt would have sold it to them if he could have made out a title without my concurrence. It is a heavy sum to pay, but I shall get it back in time. . . . I have now got the whole of my copyrights in my possession. The Cheap Reissue is selling extraordinarily."

Of 1850 and the early part of 1851 there is little to relate; Ainsworth produced no literary work during this period, and but a few extracts from his letters need be quoted before we reach the account of his next book:—

TO MISS (HORACE) SMITH.

"*October 11th*, 1850.

"I have received the accompanying note from Mr. Peter Cunningham and have replied to it briefly; but I think it better to send it to you, as you may probably wish to furnish a few particulars respecting your excellent father's life, which would not interfere with any ulterior design you may have of publishing his Memoir and correspondence, but would rather assist it . . . while they would certainly lend attraction to the proposed new edition of *Rejected Addresses*. . . . I shall hope to see you all soon, as I intend to visit Brighton next week. I have returned from Paris about a week ago."

TO JAMES CROSSLEY.

"*July* 30*th*, 1850.

"I have accepted an invitation for the Archæological Week from Robert Philips, and shall stay at Park during the meeting. My daughters Fanny and Blanche, who are also invited, will accompany me, and I believe Sir Henry and Lady Dillon will also be guests at the same house. . . . Pettigrew has been invited to stay with the Mayor. . . . With good management, and with so many good dinner givers, we ought to have a most jovial week. . . . What do you mean to do about the excursions? We might make a day to Whalley, but no further: all the rest would be bustle and bother, scrambling and confusion, but no port, or claret, or old hock."

"The Club, Brighton.

"*December* 26*th*, 1850.

"I have been detained here by the delay in completing my house.[1] . . . *The Lancashire Witches* have been published in a cheap form and are selling very well indeed. . . . I wish you could find me a first-rate subject for a story. I want to set to work, but hesitate in the choice of a subject. A second series of either *Windsor Castle* or *The Tower* would do. But what period would suit *Windsor* and what *The Tower?* Edward VI, I think, for the latter, and Elizabeth the former."

Two visits to Paris, in April and August, 1851, and much gaiety in London during the eventful season of the Great Exhibition, and then Ainsworth settled down to his next literary undertaking, which, however, did not follow the historical line proposed in the last letter, but broke, instead, fresh ground.

[1] Several new rooms added to Kensal Manor House.

In his new work, Ainsworth, for the first time, essayed a modern story dealing entirely with life in the nineteenth century.[1] But more interesting still is the fact that the first part of *Mervyn Clitheroe* is practically the author's own autobiography, wherein he recorded his experiences and described his masters and the contemporary pupils at the Manchester Grammar School, and, further, presented an account of his life and adventures at Rostherne, in Cheshire, where he used to spend his holidays, as a boy, at the farm of his grand-uncle, John Shuttleworth.

In thus drawing upon his own early reminiscences, Ainsworth was prompted, no doubt, by the prevailing literary fashion; for just at this date semi-autobiographical novels were much in vogue. Since 1847, Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre*, Thackeray in *Pendennis*, Lytton (to a certain extent) in *My Novel*, Frank Smedley in *Frank Fairlegh*, and Dickens in *David Copperfield*, had severally utilized and incorporated their own experiences and recollections in a very successful manner. So Ainsworth determined to follow suit, and, reverting to the old method of issue in monthly numbers, *Mervyn Clitheroe* made his first bow to the world in December, 1851. But, most unfortunately, the reading public, accustomed for so many years past to receive from Ainsworth a succession of brilliant, dashing, exciting romances dealing with bygone centuries, historical characters, picturesque criminals, and supernatural mysteries, did not take at all kindly to this new arrival in the shape of a simple, though admirably written, tale of contemporary English life.

[1] Portions of *Auriol* related to the nineteenth century; and *Modern Chivalry*, the work in which he collaborated with Mrs. Gore, was a story of the day.

The public, rather unreasonably, had expected a second *Lancashire Witches*, and was disappointed to find its nerves unwrung by *Mervyn Clitheroe;* and the author, too, was naturally disappointed that the merits of his new work were not more appreciated.

Many of Ainsworth's personal friends, however, at once perceived the excellence of this—the most intimate of all his stories; and to one or two of these sympathetic readers the author imparted some interesting details anent the genesis and originals of incidents and characters in the narrative.

To Charles Ollier he wrote :—

"*December 3rd*, 1851.

"*Mervyn Clitheroe*, No. I, was sent to you by my directions, and I am very glad you like it. I had a letter to-day from Costello, much to the same effect as your own, and both have given me great gratification. Having chosen an everyday subject, I have endeavoured to be as natural as possible, and most of the characters and incidents of this part of the story are taken from life and actual occurrences. The schooldays of 'Mervyn' are a mere transcript of what happened to me at the Free Grammar School at Manchester. 'Dr. Lonsdale' and 'Mr. Cane' [1] are no exaggeration. 'John Leigh' [2] is unchanged even in name. Almost all the incidents at Nethercrofts happened to myself; and the old farmer and his wife stood in the same degree of relationship to me that they are supposed to stand to the autobiographer. My uncle always declared he would make 'a gentleman of me,' by which he meant he would leave me the whole of his property, which was very considerable. But he did not do so, or probably I should not have thought it

[1] The names Ainsworth used when describing his schoolmasters, Dr. Jeremiah Smith and Dr. Robinson Elsdale.

[2] The old soldier, who kept the tuck-shop opposite the school.

worth while to describe him.[1] The farmhouse and its occupants are, I think, true to nature. And even 'Mrs. Mervyn,' who may appear overdrawn, is taken from life, and lives at Kersal Cell ('The Anchorites'), near Manchester.

"I have adopted a simple Defoe-ish style as best adapted to my subject; and I rather feared that this homely sort of narrative would not be relished, or appreciated. But you have reassured me. You are as accurate as judicious in your remarks on the *im*propriety of putting such words into 'Ned Culcheth's' mouth, and if I have an opportunity of correcting the No., I shall not forget your suggestion. Indeed, I believe I have derived advantage from your remarks in every work I have written, and I am rejoiced to think that this, the latest, pleases you so much. As you may suppose, I have abundant material, which I shall endeavour to work out as I have begun.

"Thanking you, my dear Ollier, for your praises, of which I am proud,

"I am always yours,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

In his numerous letters to Charles Kent, Ainsworth often mentioned *Mervyn Clitheroe*:—

"*Bis dat qui dat cito.* I am doubly and deeply obliged by your promptitude and kindness. You are the first to cheer me now that I have appeared on the stage once more—as you were the heartiest of my supporters on the last occasion. *Mervyn Clitheroe*, as you seem to have divined, is somewhat of an autobiography. . . . Cottonborough, I need scarcely say, is Manchester. . . .

"I persuade myself you will like No. 6 better than

[1] John Shuttleworth bequeathed the Rostherne property to his nephew, Captain John Ainsworth (uncle of the novelist), at his death in 1821. His wife, Mary Shuttleworth, had died in 1819, aged 88.

anything I have written. There is novelty, I think, about it. . . ."

"Again my best thanks are due to you for a most kindly and serviceable notice of *Mervyn* in *The Sun*. You say far more flattering things of him than he deserves; but I am too vain a parent not to be pleased with this praise (albeit unmerited) of my bantling. Let us hope that he will justify your commendations of him by the way in which he will close his career. . . ."

"Fresh from the perusal of your gratifying notice in *The Sun* . . . I turn to thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. I cannot indeed adequately thank you, but must reserve the full expression of my gratitude until I have again the pleasure of seeing you—and on the next occasion our dinner must be *tête-à-tête*. You have said kinder and pleasanter things of me than have been said by any other friends—excepting perhaps my dear lost friend, Laman Blanchard—and again I thank you from my heart."

In the following valuable letter to Mrs. Hughes, Ainsworth fully expresses his disappointment at the reception of his new story by the public :—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,

"*January 8th*, 1852.

"MY DEAR MRS. HUGHES,

"I am highly gratified to learn from Mrs. Touchet that you think so well of *Mervyn Clitheroe*. Though, in some respects, he resembles his father more than the rest of his brethren, he is so little like *them*, that the public scarcely seem to recognize him, at present, as one of the family. I have taken more pains with him than with some of the others, and have tried to make him a very quiet boy, so that no one should be offended by him, but I fear his simplicity and homely character may some-

what stand in his light. But I am very glad to find you like him. Your remarks are perfectly just as to 'Sissy Culcheth.' It is a mere stage character, and can impose on no one who understands Welsh. Indeed, I am now very sorry that I made her a Carnarvonshire lass, as it will compel me to drop the character soon.

"The old farmhouse is sketched from nature; so are its inmates my great-uncle and aunt Shuttleworth, and all their household. The adventure of the cat happened to myself. I did not shoot it. 'Marston' is Rostherne in Cheshire—the incident on the ice is partly true—and, in short, the Tale is, to a certain extent, an autobiography. I wish the public took to it better, for, as you know, I am easily discouraged, and cannot swim against the tide. I cannot win the race, unless I am cheered on. Now, here I have taken pains. I have not dashed hastily at my work, nor put forth any ill-considered crudities. I meant to write a natural story in a natural manner, and to draw upon my own recollections, to a certain extent, for incidents and characters. It does not seem to succeed; and I am sorry for it, because if it *had*, I think I could have made a good book. 'Mrs. Mervyn' is meant for Miss Atherton. . . .

"I hope you like your present residence, and no doubt it suits you better than the old one; but you must often think of dear Kingston Lisle, and the garden and the old trees, and the little church, and the downs. I often do. It is a picture graven on my heart, as are all my recollections connected with you. I feel your kindness now, as deeply as I felt it then.

"Wishing you all happiness, Believe me, my dear Friend,

"Your sincerely attached and ever obliged

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."[1]

[1] Mrs. Hughes had removed to Reading from her old home at Kingston Lisle, where Ainsworth had spent so many happy days at the

The sale of the story did not improve, and on 4th March, 1852, the author wrote to Crossley :—

"I am glad you like the last number of *Mervyn Clitheroe*. I cannot understand why it has not found favour with the general public, because I have written it carefully, and I think there is interest in the story. But I could not go on at a loss, when that loss might be serious, if increased monthly. It is certainly vexatious."

Consequently, Ainsworth stopped the issue of the tale at the fourth monthly number (March, 1852), which contained the following notice :—

"The First Part of the Adventures of Mervyn Clitheroe —'part of a whole, yet in itself complete'—is now concluded. Some delay will probably occur in the continuation of the story. The Author regrets it, but the delay is unavoidable on his part. Unforeseen circumstances are likely to compel him to suspend, for a while, his pleasant task ;—pleasant, because many of the incidents and characters have been supplied to him by his own personal recollections, while the scenes in which the events are placed have been familiar to him since childhood. Ere long he hopes to meet his friends again ; bidding them, meanwhile, a kindly farewell.

"February, 1852."

Although the narrative had broken off at a very interesting and important point in the life of the hero, Ainsworth laid the story aside for nearly six years. Then, in December, 1857, at the earnest persuasion of Crossley,

time he was writing *Jack Sheppard* and *Guy Fawkes*, etc. Mrs. Hughes died the following year (1853), and the pleasant visits to Berkshire became but a regretful memory of the past.

MRS. JAMES TOUCHET AT KENSAL LODGE.
From a photograph.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH, IN THE FIFTIES.
From a photograph.

who had always perceived its merits and possibilities, *Mervyn Clitheroe* was resumed and completed in eight additional numbers, the last appearing in June, 1858.[1] To celebrate the completion of *Mervyn Clitheroe*, Ainsworth gave a whitebait dinner at the "Trafalgar," Greenwich; and writing to Crossley in May, 1858, he said: "It is a large literary dinner on the 2nd June, so you must stay for it. You will meet some pleasant people. . . . Just now I am in the agonies of completing *Mervyn Clitheroe*—but I must be done by Friday morning at the outside, and shall be quite ready for anything in the way of jollity on or after that day."

With the usual contrariety of human nature, critics and public warmly welcomed and highly praised the resuscitated *Mervyn Clitheroe;* and although, as a matter of fact, the new chapters were not so good as those in the neglected first part, the story was now a great success.

But few prominent novelists have given to the world such an intimate and unaffected account of their early days as Ainsworth in *Mervyn Clitheroe*. As in *David Copperfield*, there is a simple, loving touch in the style which has irresistible charm. And so peculiar is much of the story to himself, that Ainsworth describes exactly his own personal appearance as a youth,[2] and even records his impetuous, warm temper—which in real life engendered as many mischances as befell Mervyn Clitheroe. The nomenclature, too, in this book was all of family and familiar origin. "Mervyn" came from his Touchet relatives, and had been the name of some of the Earls of Castlehaven; "Apphia," the unusual name

[1] These later numbers were published by George Routledge, and the earlier ones by Chapman and Hall. [2] Book II, Chapter I.

of the heroine of the story, was derived from Ainsworth's great-grandmother, Apphia Holland, who married James Ainsworth, of Mottram; and the appellations of "Clitheroe," "Malpas," "Mobberley," "Massey," "Culcheth," "Sale," etc., were taken from places in Lancashire and Cheshire well known to the author from his childhood.

The strictly autobiographical portion of *Mervyn Clitheroe* commences with the capital description of the writer's experiences at the Manchester Grammar School. In addition to the masters, he introduced several of his schoolmates; "Simpson" was Oswald Streynsham, and in the character of "John Brideoake" he portrayed—to a certain extent—the qualities of his unfortunate brother, Gilbert Ainsworth. Like his prototype, "Brideoake" was a quiet, studious, and very talented boy, who, after winning a scholarship, proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, where, as the result of over-study, his health broke down, and his early promise was never fulfilled. But here, of course, the analogy ceases: Ainsworth did not introduce the mental tragedy of his brother's subsequent life, and "Brideoake" has a happier fate provided for him in the book.

The Cheshire scenes are, perhaps, the best of all in *Mervyn Clitheroe;* and Ainsworth well described Rostherne ("Marston"), Dunham ("Dunton"), with its beautiful park, and other places in this locality, with which some of his earliest and happiest recollections were associated. Particularly good is the picture of the old-world customs and games which took place on Twelfth Night in the farmer's barn.

Rostherne, most romantically situated, with its fine

church, on the sylvan banks of the mere, is one of the loveliest spots in the country. "Nethercrofts"—the ancient black and white, thatched farmstead, with its great house-place or kitchen—was in reality Top Marsh Farm, where lived John and Mary Shuttleworth, who, as already stated, were limned from the life, and given the name of "Mobberley," in their grand-nephew's book. The old farm, which, after the Shuttleworths died, was occupied by their niece, Hannah, and her husband, William Parks (the "Hannah Massey" and "William Weever" of the story),[1] was entirely rebuilt about fifty years ago, and in recent times has been used as a stud farm by Lord Egerton of Tatton.

Although the later portions of *Mervyn Clitheroe* are not so autobiographical as the first, and the incidents, consequently, become more fictitious, yet the localities were familiar to the author and drawn from nature. Very fine are the descriptions of the weird, marshy region, known as Delamere Forest, in mid-Cheshire. The exciting narrative of the pursuit of Malpas across the morass suggests memories of both Chat Moss and The Ride to York. "Owlarton Grange," about two miles from the picturesque glen near Weaverham (so well depicted in the book), is in part a picture of Hartford Hall, which dates from 1649, where Ainsworth often stayed when the house was occupied by his cousin, the Rev. Thomas Ainsworth, Rector of Hartford.[2]

[1] Parks and his wife died respectively in 1874 and 1850 (aged 83 and 56), and were buried in Rostherne churchyard beside the Shuttleworths and Thomas Ainsworth.

[2] Mr. Hatt-Cook, of Hartford Hall, tells me he thinks "Owlarton Grange," in addition to his house, combines the features of some other ancient mansions in the neighbourhood, including Oulton Park and Hefferston Grange.

To return to Manchester: Kersal Cell, described as "The Anchorites," still exists much as Ainsworth knew it.[1] This quaint old house, of monastic origin, with its black-and-white timber work, and deeply embayed windows with stone mullions, is very picturesquely situated at the foot of Kersal Moor, and close to the river Irwell, beyond whose sinuosities rises, a mile or two away, the forest of Manchester's chimneys. Kersal Cell was for long the residence of the Byroms, who identified themselves with the Jacobite cause. In a curious upper room of the house the Byrom and Tudor arms are carved in stone, and in the adjoining chamber John Byrom wrote the well-known hymn, *Christians, Awake.* It is remarkable that the stained-glass windows of a charming little oak-panelled room—a sort of Monk's Parlour—should display the Ainsworth arms, for no proprietary connection between this family and Kersal can be traced. But the novelist, as a boy, was constantly at the house at the time it was owned by his parents' friend, Miss Atherton (1782–1870), who was a great-granddaughter of John Byrom, and it was here he imbibed much of his own Jacobite predilections. Consequently, in *Mervyn Clitheroe,* Ainsworth, when depicting Miss Atherton ("Mrs. Mervyn"), took care to record the veneration paid to the House of Stuart in her establishment. No doubt the details were somewhat elaborated, but the presentment of that rather anomalous institution—a Jacobite household in the nineteenth century—was very cleverly done. "Mr. Comberbach," the loyal butler, is a most amusing and admirably drawn character, and makes one hope

[1] Kersal Cell was, until recently, the residence of Dr. W. A. Copinger, the distinguished archæologist.

that he, too—like so many of his fellow-actors in the book —was " taken from the life." One of the best scenes in the story is the dinner-party at " The Anchorites," where the famous Dr. Parr (" Dr. Bray ") makes his appearance. In describing this Johnson-like scholar, Ainsworth was again drawing upon his early recollections, for, as a boy, he used to see the Doctor in Manchester.[1] It was a brilliant idea to introduce Parr, a pronounced Whig, into Jacobite society, and much humour marks the incident.

Concerning other characters who appear in *Mervyn Clitheroe*, it may be stated that " Cuthbert Spring " was drawn from Gilbert Winter (hence the play upon the surname), of " Stocks," Manchester, an old friend of the author, and to whom *Jack Sheppard* was dedicated. Winter was a solicitor, and noted for his old port and good stories. Several of the latter are recorded in *Mervyn Clitheroe*. In " Dr. Foam "—with his rotund figure, bald head, and vast number of books—there is a resemblance to James Crossley ; and here, again, the fictitious name is a sort of pun upon the original, for foam is in correlation to rage or crossness ! " Colonel Clitheroe," the hero's father, was a partial sketch of Captain John Ainsworth, the novelist's uncle. " Malpas Sale " was, in all probability, an imaginary character introduced for the purposes of the story, in which, it is scarcely necessary to point out, an imaginary plot and imaginary people were cleverly entwined with scenes, incidents, and characters from real life.

Mervyn Clitheroe was illustrated by " Phiz," who, in addition to the twenty-four illustrations on steel, drew

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 26.

the charming designs, symbolical of incidents in the tale, for the covers of the monthly numbers. The former were, of course, reproduced in the first book edition, which was published by Routledge, in 1858, as the serial appearance of the story concluded. Hablot K. Browne's plates for *Mervyn Clitheroe* are magnificent, and represent, perhaps, his finest work. "Phiz" was pre-eminently successful in night scenes, and such sombre studies in this book as "The Duel"; "The Stranger at the Grave"; and "The Fight on the Mere" (entirely in sympathy with the dramatic description in the text) are only rivalled by the designs, in similar style, which he executed for *Bleak House; Dombey and Son;* and Lever's *Davenport Dunn.* Ainsworth and "Phiz" worked very happily together, and were always careful to avoid any divergence between letterpress and illustration. Thus, writing to the artist, in February, 1858, concerning the designs for *Mervyn Clitheroe,* Ainsworth said: "The best plates are generally liked. . . . I hope the present subject will suit you. 'The Conjurers Interrupted' will be effective if I am not mistaken. Pray tell your plate-printer to send me proofs early (no matter how rough) that I may prevent any variations between the text and the illustration." [1]

[1] Scarcely any of Ainsworth's letters to "Phiz" have been preserved. Dr. Edgar Browne, the artist's son, tells me his father had an enormous mass of letters from Ainsworth, Dickens, Lever, and other writers, containing their notes and suggestions for the illustrations "Phiz" designed for their books. These letters—together with a quantity of Browne's sketches, proofs, etc.—were stored in a large cupboard in his studio. On removing from the house, "Phiz"—to avoid the trouble of packing them—made a bonfire in the garden of these invaluable papers; and in this lamentable holocaust perished a unique collection of material relating to world-famous books and their authors.

An examination of the plate mentioned in the letter—"The Conjurers Interrupted"—will demonstrate how minutely letterpress and illustration are in unison. Browne's pictures of the Cheshire scenes in this book are so correct topographically—such as the views of Rostherne Church, etc.—that it would seem as if he visited the district before executing his work. He had a great admiration for Ainsworth, and appreciated the varied picturesque, romantic, and sombre incidents which the author provided for his illustrative pencil.

In the interval that elapsed between the issue of the first and second portions of *Mervyn Clitheroe*, Ainsworth produced three novels—*The Star Chamber; The Flitch of Bacon;* and *The Spendthrift.*

But before dealing with these we must revert briefly to 1852. In this year Ainsworth was much away. He went to Paris in April—Crossley had promised to go with him, but, as on former occasions, he failed at the last moment—and again in August, to see the Fêtes. From the capital he went on to Lyons, Avignon, and Marseilles, and then to Germany. He writes to Crossley from Baden-Baden :—

"I make daily excursions into the Black Forest. I wish you could have been with me last Sunday, and have heard high mass celebrated in the grand old gothic cathedral of Strasburg—you would have been enchanted."

In 1853 he set to work again, and once more indulged in his old habit of writing two stories at once.

The Star Chamber first appeared as a serial in a rather strange place—the family journal called *The Home Companion*, where the story was well illustrated by

George Measom. The first edition, in two volumes, was published early in 1854 by Routledge,[1] and the first illustrated edition, containing eight plates by "Phiz," followed in 1857. *The Star Chamber* was inscribed to a valued friend of the author's—Mrs. Mostyn, of Sillwood House, Brighton; she was Cecilia, youngest surviving daughter of Mrs. Thrale, and had, of course, known Dr. Johnson well in her youth.

As its title portends, *The Star Chamber* relates to that strange, arbitrary judicature exercised, in both criminal and civil cases, by the king's council, and which probably took its name from the star-decorated chamber in Westminster Hall where the council met. Ainsworth's novel describes the Star Chamber at the height of its power in the reign of James I, when its methods, penalties, and punishments almost rivalled those of the Spanish Inquisition; and when its privileges were abused by the King to aid and cover the extortionate monopolies he granted to his rapacious favourites. James I, and Buckingham, and other courtiers, are prominent characters in this romance, in which Ainsworth again indulged to the full his taste for minutely describing the gorgeous, bejewelled costumes of the men of the period, and the profuse banquets then in vogue. The opening scene at the "Three Cranes" Tavern in the Vintry (a hostelry mentioned in the pages of both Ben Jonson and Pepys) is very vivid. Later on, there is a fine picture of Jacobean London as seen from Stamford Hill;[2] and then a very

[1] This seems to have been the initiation of Ainsworth's long association with George Routledge (1812–88), a native of Cumberland, who commenced his publishing business in London in 1843, and established his New York branch in 1854.

[2] Chapter XIII.

charming delineation of May-Day revels at Tottenham. Ainsworth was pre-eminently the chronicler of England in her "merrie daies"—he always recounted with enthusiastic delight the simple pleasures and customs of bygone times.

Another portion of the book depicts Theobalds, the palace in Hertfordshire acquired by James I from the Cecils, in exchange for Hatfield, and which was razed to the ground during the Commonwealth. There is also a good picture of Whitehall and the jousts in the tilting-yard of the palace. *The Star Chamber*, albeit the long arm of coincidence is sometimes unduly stretched, and the machinery of its plot rather conventionally melodramatic, is a good historical novel and a sparkling picture of English manners in the time of the first Stuart king.

Here may now find a place a letter which reminds us that a successful author can at the same time be a successful commercial man, although the combination is but rarely met with :—

"KENSAL MANOR HOUSE,

"*March* 31*st*, 1853.

"MY DEAR CROSSLEY,

"This will introduce to you my friend, Mr. W. H. G. Kingston, of the old Oporto House of Kingston and Sons, Wine Merchants, who is visiting Manchester for the purpose of extending his connections there. . . . I think you may very likely have met Mr. Kingston at my house. . . ."

In the summer of 1853 a great change took place in Ainsworth's life, for he gave up Kensal Manor House, left London, and fixed his residence at Brighton. This

event marks the close of the most important epoch in his career; he ceased to be the leader of the brilliant band of literary and artistic people who had gathered around him for many years at Kensal, and his famous hospitality—once so prominent a feature in London life—became but a pleasant memory. No longer was the Harrow Road the favourite ride out from town, for there was no warm welcome at the end of the journey now: Ainsworth was gone, the old circle of friends was broken up for ever, and so Dickens and Forster, Thackeray, and many another, came no more to Kensal Green.[1]

One cannot but pause in regret at the passing of the memorable, happy days at Kensal and the severing of ties which had bound together so many bright and congenial spirits of a very remarkable epoch of talent. But the change was inevitable. Ainsworth's extensive hospitality and careless liberality during the past twelve years had made considerable inroads upon his financial resources; further, his magazines had much depreciated in value and had ceased to be very profitable, and his own literary work no longer commanded its former high figure. Famous before Dickens and Thackeray were heard of, Ainsworth's vogue was now eclipsed by these two writers, and other novelists, such as Wilkie Collins, Anthony Trollope, and Charles Reade, were rising into fame and attracting much attention. So, for many reasons, Ainsworth found it necessary to retrench, lay down horses and menservants, and altogether live more quietly.

[1] Kensal Manor House still stands, despite the changed character of the neighbourhood, and, rather appropriately, it is now (1910) used for journalistic offices and a printing press. Here is published *The Irish Book Lover*, the monthly paper devoted to the literature of Ireland, edited by Dr. J. S. Crone, J.P., of Kensal Lodge.

5, ARUNDEL TERRACE, KEMP TOWN, BRIGHTON.
AINSWORTH'S HOME, 1853-67.
Photographed by Mr. H. de Witt, Hassocks

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His new house, though—No. 5, Arundel Terrace, Kemp Town—was a very nice one, facing the sea, at the extreme east end of Brighton. It was almost the last house on that side of the town, and but a step to the beautiful rolling Downs, which Ainsworth greatly loved; scarcely a day passed that he did not go for a long ramble over the green expanses to Ovingdean, Iford, or Telscombe. He also became a well-known figure on the sea-front at Brighton, and the inhabitants were wont to point him out to visitors as one of their most distinguished possessions. He, however, took no part in the public or municipal life of the town, but entertained privately on a large scale. Ainsworth's residence in Arundel Terrace—which had previously been occupied by his friend, Charles Hervey—was roomy and in the usual style of a town house: a dining-room with library beyond on the ground floor, and the drawing-room upstairs.[1] He gave as many large dinner-parties here as in the old days near London, but Brighton society was general rather than literary and artistic. Occasionally, his earlier friends visited the town, and, of course, came to see him. Thus, Thackeray, when staying in Marine Square, came to dine, and brought his two young daughters with him. Lady Ritchie tells me they all greatly enjoyed themselves; that she recollects Ainsworth as being then very handsome and distinguished-looking; and that her father said how glad he was to have seen Ainsworth again, and been able to settle some small difficulty that had arisen between them.

After this meeting the two friends seem, for a time,

[1] A tablet, commemorating Ainsworth's residence here, is being erected by Mr. C. A. Bleckly, the owner of the house, this year (1910).

to have corresponded frequently. Writing to Ainsworth in 1856, Thackeray says: "Now *do* do me a favour. Come up on Saturday, see and hear the George III lecture, it won't offend your loyalty. We'll dine at 5, and have a good bottle of Claret before we go, and I'll ask one or two cozy friends for Sunday the 25th." And on 13th January, 1857, he continued: "Yesterday Mr. Beale came to me for 4 lectures at Brighton, to be paid for at the extremely moderate figure of 50 guineas a lecture (this is between ourselves)."

In March, 1857, Thackeray planned a dinner at which Dickens, Ainsworth, Maclise, and himself—an inimitable quartette—should meet once more around the festive board, as they were wont to do twenty years agone at Fraser's and at Kensal Lodge, and recall the symposia of the past. Unfortunately, both Dickens and Ainsworth were engaged for the date fixed. Writing to Ainsworth Thackeray said:—

"Here comes a note from Dickens who begs too for a remission of the dinner: as I can't have it without my two roaring animals, and the play wouldn't be worth coming to with the part of Hamlet omitted, the great Titmarsh Banquet is hereby postponed, to be held on some other occasion, however, with uncommon splendour."

And in notifying Maclise of the postponement of the dinner, Thackeray amusingly wrote:—

"... Ainsworth and 'Boz' won't come, and press for delay. Well! then, although I know, from the state of the banker's account at present, next week there will probably be about five shillings wherewith to buy a dinner, yet let them have their will. Something tells me that it may be long before the banquet in question

takes place—but it is their wish—so be it. The greatest of all the names of Allah (Goethe says) is ' Amen.' . . ."

It is much to be hoped that the reunion of the four friends did eventually take place, but there is no further mention of it.

After giving up Kensal Manor House, Ainsworth, when in town, used to stay at his club, in order to see his old friends. He was there in June, 1854, after returning from Paris, and wrote to Crossley : " If you will call upon me at three o'clock at 1, Whitehall Gardens (National Club) we will go down to Greenwich together. I expect Costello and W. Francis Ainsworth to accompany us. We shall muster *ten* at dinner." He also saw Dickens and Forster. The latter writes to Ainsworth on 14th June :—

" I was dragged out to the Club this morning to consult a file, and, to my great regret, missed you. If I rightly understand your wish, nothing will give me greater pleasure than to dine with you on Tuesday next at 6. Only last night I was drinking out of the old Cerberus glasses with Dickens, and thinking and talking of old days."

The old days were getting very far away now ; and the memories of those pleasant times with Ainsworth out at Kensal Green—the country rides—the little dinners—must have often come back, almost with sadness, as the years passed on, youth slipped away, and death narrowed the once merry circle. Perhaps the occasion in 1854, alluded to above, was the last on which Ainsworth dined with his two old friends who had first met at his house ; for after Dickens's removal from London to Gadshill, in 1856, there are no further records

of his meetings with Ainsworth. Though they drifted apart, their warm regard for each other—which dated from the brave days of *Pickwick* and *Crichton*—never abated. It seems strange that so intimate a friendship should relax without any definite cause ; the only reasons that can be suggested are that Dickens, in his later years, was much away in America and travelling about on his reading tours, and that habits of solitariness were just beginning to grow upon Ainsworth—in strange contrast to his former love of society. In after years, with advancing age, this new phase of his temperament became more and more pronounced, as will be seen later ; and as the old friends of his earlier time died off, or were lost sight of, he formed no fresh ties.

So, the " Fifties " mark the close of Ainsworth's meridian in both a literary and social sense.

CHAPTER XXI

"THE FLITCH OF BACON": AINSWORTH'S REVIVAL OF THE CUSTOM OF DUNMOW.

SOMEWHERE about the twelfth century there was instituted at the Priory of Dunmow, in Essex, a custom of presenting a flitch (side) of bacon to any married couple who would swear that for a year and a day, from the date of their marriage, they had neither of them offended against the laws of nuptial morality, had never indulged in domestic brawls, had never offended each other in word or deed, and, finally, had never wished themselves unmarried again since the fatal knot was tied. Onerous conditions indeed; and so framed, no doubt, both to enhance the merit of winning the prize and to enable the donor of the flitch to "save his bacon"—which, we may assume, was the origin of the phrase in use to this day. All through monastic times the Custom of the Flitch at Dunmow Priory was preserved; and when, at the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII, the place fell into secular hands, the old Custom came to be regarded as a sort of jocular tenure attached to the Lordship of the Manor of Little Dunmow. So, the new owners of the land occasionally gave the flitch, when applicants successfully proved their claim; and the old ceremony of taking the oath, while kneeling on sharp stones by the

church door, and the procession of the happy pair carried in the ancient chair,[1] preceded by the Flitch, was enacted with all its medieval picturesqueness. The last time the Custom was celebrated, under its original conditions, occurred in 1751.

In the history of this quaint and ancient Custom, Ainsworth—enthusiastic lover of old times and old ways—was, of course, deeply interested. He had planned for many years a romance on the subject, and at last he found the opportunity to write *The Flitch of Bacon, or The Custom of Dunmow*. The story commenced in *The New Monthly Magazine* in January, 1853; and on its completion there in May, 1854, it was at once published by Routledge, with eight illustrations by (Sir) John Gilbert. *The Flitch of Bacon* was dedicated in the following letter to the well-known continental publisher of English Classics and his wife :—

"TO THE CHEVALIER[2] AND MADAME BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ, OF LEIPZIG.

"As a record of rare conjugal attachment, this Tale may be appropriately inscribed to you, my good friends; than whom I have never known a more fondly-united couple.

"Were I the Donor of the FLITCH, I would bestow it upon you. As it is, I must content myself with offering you this simple Chronicle of a good old English Custom—something akin to which may, perhaps, exist in your kindly Fatherland.

[1] Originally, it is believed, the Prior's chair. It is still preserved in Little Dunmow Church—which is all that remains of the Priory buildings. The chair has holes, through which were passed the poles for carrying the couple who had won the Flitch.

[2] Tauchnitz was, later on, created a baron by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg.

"Accept it as a slight testimony of the great regard in which you are both held by

"Yours very sincerely,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.

"*Arundel Terrace, Brighton.*
"*May* 1, 1854."

Writing to Charles Ollier on 10th April, 1854, Ainsworth had said: "I am just finishing off a little Tale, which I will send you when published, as I think you will like it. It contains some ballads, and—if an author may judge of his own, which is doubtful—it is not the worst of my productions. You will decide."

And to Charles Kent he wrote, on 19th June:—

"I hope you have received *The Flitch of Bacon* in its complete form. Perhaps, as the youngest of my literary offspring, I regard it with too much favour, but it seems to me one of the best things I have achieved. I do not know whether you will concur with me in opinion. You have spoken very kindly of it during its interrupted progress through *The New Monthly*. . . .

"I am just now in treaty with Webster for a dramatic version of the story for the Adelphi, and when it is produced at that house, I hope you will do me the favour to assist at the first representation. . . ."

Although but a simple tale of old English life, and by no means one of the author's best works, *The Flitch of Bacon* became very popular, and was translated into German, French, Dutch, and Russian. All through the summer of 1855, when the Crimean War was raging, and Sebastopol in the throes of its terrible bombardments, the public of St. Petersburg was reading and appreciating this English story, *The Flitch of Bacon*, as given in the

Russian tongue in the pages of a magazine entitled *Otechestvennuiya Zapiski*. In Paris, a play adapted from the book, and entitled *La Coutume de Dunmow*, was produced at the Theatre Porte Saint Martin.

In Dunmow itself the story was, of course, thought much of; and The Flitch Inn—though not the picturesque, rambling building imagined by Ainsworth—borrowed (and still bears) on its signboard the lines he wrote for *his* Flitch Inn :—

> " Painted in Gold
> The FLITCH behold,
> Of fam'd Dunmow the boast !
> Then here should call
> Fond couples all,
> And pledge it in a toast."

The Flitch of Bacon contains many excellent ballads in the author's early style; some of these were founded on fact—such as *The Barber of Ripon* and *Old Grindrod's Ghost*. Ainsworth mentions the source of the latter in the following letter to Crossley :—

" *February 20th*, 1853.

" I am much grieved to hear of the death of poor Gilbert Winter. . . . It is a saddening reflection that before he was withdrawn his powers should have so much failed, that he was scarcely to be recognized as the Gilbert Winter of yore. I would willingly say something about him (and trust to be able to do so), but just now my time is so fully occupied, that I have enough to do to get through my daily work and dare not add to it. But Gilbert Winter shall not want the little stone I can throw on his cairn—sooner or later. I had just finished a ballad on one of his old stories, which you may possibly have heard, and I therefore send it to you. But it must

not be used, as it will not appear before the April *New Monthly*."

Another ballad in *The Flitch of Bacon*, that entitled *My Old Complaint*—a ditty in the style of *Jolly Nose*—was set to music by J. L. Hatton ; and others were translated into French by compilers of anthologies abroad. Writing to the Chevalier de Chatelain, Ainsworth says :—

" BRIGHTON,

" *October 22nd*, 1854.

" Thanks for your charming little volume full of graceful translations. You have done me the honour, I find, to include *The Custom of Dunmow* in your collection. Within the last few days I have received another version in French of the same ballad by Jacques Desrosiers. The tale has been translated under the title of *Un An et un Jour* and published at Bruxelles.

" You will be glad to hear that a worthy personage has announced his intention of bequeathing a sum sufficient for the perpetual maintenance of the good old Custom."

So much public interest, indeed, was aroused by Ainsworth's *Flitch of Bacon*, that several of the inhabitants of Dunmow—taking advantage of the attention directed to their town—called a meeting, and having formed a committee, for the purpose of reviving the dormant Custom, communicated with Ainsworth, who replied as follows :—

" I am happy to find I have been in some measure instrumental in reviving the good Custom of Dunmow. It will give me pleasure to co-operate with the Committee ; and I beg to say I will gladly present a Flitch

of Bacon to any couple who may claim it next summer, and who can justify their title to the prize. I shall also be happy to contribute five guineas towards the expenses of the entertainment on the occasion, which I feel certain will be well carried out."

The Committee then again met to make arrangements, and a notice appeared in the local papers giving directions for the procedure to be followed by intending claimants for the Flitch. Many claims were sent in, and the couple finally selected were Mr. James Barlow, a builder, of Chipping Ongar, and his wife, Hannah. Just as this point was decided upon, another very strong claim was received from the Chevalier and Madame de Chatelain—who both followed literature as a profession—and Ainsworth consented to present a second Flitch. He wrote :—

" 5, Arundel Terrace,
Brighton,
" *January* 5, 1855.

" Dear Madame de Chatelain,

" I need scarcely say, I hope, that I shall be most happy to entertain your claim for the Flitch, and though I believe a prior claim has been made, I will gladly give a second prize rather than you should experience any disappointment. I will write to Mr. Charles Pavey, who acts as secretary to the local committee of the Fête, and he shall send you all particulars. The fact of the Chevalier de Chatelain being a Frenchman is only an additional recommendation to me.

" With best wishes for your continued happiness."

Unfortunately, the revival of the good old Custom was not welcomed by certain magnates at Dunmow, although

the promised festivities were very popular among the inhabitants generally. The clergy of the district frowned upon the project, and hostile papers denouncing it were circulated in adjacent towns and villages. The Lord of the Manor of Little Dunmow refused to allow the Custom to be revived on the original site—near the small church (to which the great Priory of yore had dwindled)—and so the ceremonies took place at Great Dunmow, about two miles distant.

The appointed day, 19th July, 1855, for the revival of the Custom of the Flitch of Bacon, dawned with a pelting, heavy storm of rain, which calamity prevented the attendance of many intending visitors from a distance, and the special trains from London were not filled as they would have been under favourable weather conditions. People, however, from the country around Dunmow came in great numbers, some in wagons and carts adorned with flowers and green boughs; and by midday the streets in the town were crowded.

The ceremonies commenced in the Town Hall, where the interior was profusely decorated with garlands of roses and other ornaments; and a chair of state, jury-boxes, and seats for the claimants, witnesses, and counsel, were arranged to form the nuptial court. The Hall was well filled with spectators, who were admitted by tickets costing five shillings each. Six maidens and six bachelors having volunteered to act as jurors, Ainsworth, as the donor of the flitches, took the chair, at two o'clock, to preside over the court. The two sets of claimants, with their counsel and witnesses, were ushered to their places; and the præco, or crier (Mr. Pavey), with mock ceremony, opened the court. Ainsworth then proceeded

to deliver an interesting address, in the course of which he said:—

"We have met this day to revive the time-honoured Custom of the Dunmow Flitch of Bacon,—to revive it with all its old solemnities and pageantry.

"How and when the Custom originated cannot be precisely ascertained. In all probability, it dates back to the Twelfth Century, in which case its duration would extend over a term of seven hundred years. Whether the usage was instituted by the founder of the ancient family of Fitzwalter,[1] or by the Knights Templars, to whom the Manor of Little Dunmow belonged, and in whose possession it continued, until the dissolution of that renowned Order in 1314, can only be matter of conjecture; but that it was well known in the Fourteenth Century, and was even then regarded as an old observance, we have positive proof, which shall be presently adduced.

"A Custom of such high antiquity, so quaint, so picturesque, so thoroughly medieval in character, so jocular, yet so full of serious import, satirical yet genial —deriding domestic brawls, but encouraging true conjugal attachment,—rewarding it, and holding it up as an example for imitation—a Custom, which has long since

[1] Sir William Dugdale (1605–86), the antiquary, in his *Monasticon* states: "Robert Fitzwalter, who lived long beloved by King Henry . . . betook himself in his latter days to prayer and deeds of charity, and great and bountiful alms to the poor, kept great hospitality, and re-edified the decayed Priory of Dunmow, which Juga, a most devout and religious woman, had builded; in which Priory arose a custom, begun and instituted either by him or some of his ancestors, which is verified by the common saying or proverb, 'That he which repents him not of his marriage, either sleeping or waking, in a year and a day, may lawfully go to Dunmow and fetch a gammon of bacon.'"

S. M. E.

THE FLITCH OF BACON CEREMONY, AINSWORTH IN THE CHAIR,
DUNMOW TOWN HALL, JULY 19TH, 1855.
Reproduced by permission from "The Illustrated London News."

passed into a proverb—which has been sung by the Father of English poetry, and has served to point the shafts of our earliest satirists—such a Custom, I say, ought to be reverenced and upheld, and not permitted to fall into disuse.

" With this feeling we have undertaken its Revival.

" But Dunmow is not alone in the Custom of the Flitch. A similar usage prevailed, as is well known, at Whichnoure, in Staffordshire, and this Manor, like that of Little Dunmow, belonged originally to the Knights Templars. The claimants of the Whichnoure Bacon appear to have been few and far between, for Horace Walpole, who was a guest at the old mansion in 1760, writes [1] thus concerning it :—' Do you know that this is the medieval manor-house, where the married ladies may have a Flitch of Bacon on the easiest terms in the world? I should suspect that the owners would be ruined in satisfying the condition of the obligation, and that the parks would be overstocked with hogs instead of deer. On the contrary, it is thirty years since the Flitch was claimed, and Mr. Offley was never so near losing one as when you and Mr. Conway were at Rugley. He so little expects a claim, that the Flitch is only hung over the hall chimney-piece, carved in wood ' . . .

" Dunmow has been more fortunate in respect to the number of claimants, yet even here they have been surprisingly few; parties being deterred, perhaps, by the severity of the conditions. The authenticated winners of the prize are only six in number: three before the Reformation, and three subsequent to it.

" The Custom of the Bacon Flitch was not confined to

[1] To Caroline, Countess of Ailesbury, wife of H. S. Conway.

our own country, but was practised with similar formalities in France and Germany. At the Abbey of Saint Meleine, near Rennes, in Brittany, the usage of the Flitch was observed for six hundred years; and Dr. William Bell relates that a Flitch of Bacon was hung upon the entrance of the Rothe Thurm, a now demolished gate at Vienna, with the following doggerel lines attached to it:—

" ' Is there to be found a married man,
Who in verity declare can,
That his marriage he doth not rue;
That he hath no fear of his wife for a shrew?
He may this Bacon for himself down hew.'

" We do not hear how often the Austrian bacon was cut down.

" Evidence that the Dunmow Custom was well known in the Fourteenth Century, is contained in the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, a religious allegorical satire attributed to Robert de Longland, and written about the year 1362. . . . The satirist refers to the hasty and ill-assorted marriages that followed the great pestilence—the ' black death ' ; the same which is made the foundation of *The Decameron* of Boccaccio. He thus writes:

" ' Many a couple since the Pestilence,
Have plighted them together,
The fruit that they bring forth
Is foul words.
In jealousy without happiness,
And quarrelling in bed.
They have no children but strife
And slapping between them,—
And although they go to Dunmow
(Unless the devil help!),
To follow after the Flitch
They never obtain it;
And unless they both are perjured,
They lose the Bacon.'

"In this curious passage (the earliest known mention of the Flitch) it will be observed that express reference is made to the conditions of the Custom.

"Some forty years later—namely, about 1400—we find the Dunmow Flitch specially alluded to by Chaucer in the *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale*. The Merry Wife is laughingly telling how she treated her husbands, and shows that they had little chance of obtaining a prize for matrimonial felicity. She archly observes—

> "'The Bacoun was nat fet for hem I trowe
> That som men han in Essex at Dunmowe.'

"The next mention of the Custom occurs in an old theological poem, a sort of paraphrase in verse of the Ten Commandments, written towards the year 1460, and of which some extracts are printed in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ* by Wright and Halliwell. The author is commenting on the Seventh Commandment, and with great severity upon the fair sex:

> "'I can fynd no man now that wille enquere
> The parfyt wais unto Dunmow;
> For they repent hem within a yere,
> And many within a weke, and sooner, men trow;
> That cawsith the weis to be rough and overgrow,
> That no man may fynd path or gap,
> The world is turned to another shap.
>
> "'Befe and moton wylle serve well enow,
> And for to seche so farr a lytill Bakon flyk,
> Which hath long hanggid resty and tow;
> And the wey I telle yow is cumberous and thyk,
> And thou might stumble and take the cryk;
> Therefore bide at home, what so'ever hap,
> Tylle the world be turnyd to another shap.'

"Happily, the world *is* now 'turned to another shape,' and the ways to Dunmow are easily to be found.

" Besides what has been cited, it has been stated to me by the learned antiquarian and philologist, Mr. Thomas Wright—whom I am happy to see amongst us—that allusions are made to the Custom in manuscripts of the later part of the fifteenth century, at Oxford or Cambridge ; but these are not easy of access.

" The first recorded claim of the Dunmow Flitch was made in the reign of Henry the Sixth. To how many loving couples the prize had been previously adjudged we are left in ignorance ; but we hope we may assume that the candidates had been numerous and successful, though the register of them is unluckily lost.

" On the 7th of April, then, in the year 1445, Richard Wright, of Bradbourghe, near Norwich, appeared before John Cannon, Prior of the Monastery of Little Dunmow, and demanded the Flitch. We may imagine the ceremonial—at once picturesque and mirthful—the grey old monastery on the hill, with its courts thronged with townsfolk from Dunmow, come to witness the show and make holiday. Minstrels are there, mummers and merry-makers of all kinds—monks from the convent, smiling at the unwonted scene, and a broad-backed varlet bearing the guerdon of conjugal happiness—a knightly personage, with an esquire and pages in attendance—fair damsels and young gallants, laughing blithely—burgesses from Dunmow in their sober gowns and caps—buxom dames and blooming maidens—the venerable Prior standing beneath the porch of the convent church, and the loving pair kneeling before him on the sharp stones, and reciting the oath. We may also conjure up the long procession that ensued, as it made the circuit round the convent walls, monks, pages, esquires, minstrels, youths,

and maidens, and even those well stricken in years. We may imagine this gleeful procession of the olden time, and the sports and pastimes with which the day concluded.

"How changed the scene in 1751, when the last claim was made. Dunmow itself is changed; scarce a trace being left of a habitation of Henry the Sixth's days. The old monastery has disappeared, and nothing remains but a fragment of the old conventual church, including the porch beneath which the Prior had stood in days of yore. The costumes are those of George the Second's day, and you may bring them before you at once by recalling one of Hogarth's prints. A portly Vicar occupies the place of the Prior, and he is accompanied by the Steward of the Manor and other officers, who honour the festival with their presence. In other respects the ceremony is the same. The happy couple (John Shakeshaft of Weathersfield, in this county, and Ann his wife) have taken the oath, and received the prize, and are borne aloft on men's shoulders, seated together in the ancient chair—the bachelors and maidens, constituting the jury, walking behind them, and music enlivening their progress around the precincts of the old priory.

"The Conditions of the Custom of the Dunmow Flitch are, that the candidates for the prize shall have lived together in the holy state of matrimony, with perfect affection, and without a quarrel, for a Twelvemonth and a Day—hard conditions indeed, but proof must be given of their fulfilment, else will the prize be refused.

"We have two claims to decide upon to-day—both highly reported. . . .

"The prizes offered are products of the place. Our

Flitches are Dunmow bred, Dunmow fed, and Dunmow cured; and I trust will do credit to the purveyor, Mr. Taylor, of this town.

"And now a word in explanation of my own appearance before you on this occasion. I am not the Lord of the Manor of Little Dunmow. If I were, no fears need be entertained for the due maintenance of the good old Custom. A Flitch should be always ready for a loving couple—to be gained, as Horace Walpole says, 'on the easiest terms in the world.' I would have the real thing, and not a sham Flitch, like that at Whichnoure, over my hall chimney-piece. But it appeared that, although happy couples could be found, bacon was not to be had at Little Dunmow, and the ancient Custom seeming in danger of becoming obsolete, Great Dunmow advanced to the rescue, determined to uphold it. Certain inhabitants of the latter place, having met together, applied to me, considering—why, I know not—that I was a proper person to bestow the Flitch. I at once, and with the utmost pleasure, acceded to the request; and I can assure you that my gratification was enhanced, when I found it likely I should have two Flitches to bestow instead of one.

"Lover as I am of ancient Customs—anxious as I am to keep alive all traditions of the past, and to see old sports and pastimes practised as they were once practised in Merrie England—desirous as I am of promoting, to the utmost of my power, the harmless recreation of the people—it is a matter of pride and rejoicing to me to be instrumental in reviving such a ceremony as the good old Custom of the Dunmow Flitch of Bacon."

The address was received with hearty cheers, and the jury having been called over and charged, Robert Bell,[1] the counsel for the claimants, proceeded to open their case. Dudley Costello,[2] who was briefed to defend the flitches and the traditions and laws of the Custom, cross-examined the claimants and their witnesses in strict forensic style. Although the learned counsel on both sides discharged their duties with correct legal acumen and gravity, the amusing proceedings kept the court in a continual roar of laughter.[3] Both the Chevalier and Madame de Chatelain and Mr. and Mrs. Barlow were successful in proving that they had fulfilled the conditions of the Custom, and consequently the jury found that each couple had won the Flitch. This closed the proceedings in the Town Hall, and a procession was then formed outside in the following order :—

Marshal, in medieval dress.

Stud of horses, mounted by yeomen in appropriate dresses, carrying banners, with the names of all the claimants since the thirteenth century inscribed on them, and the arms of persons associated with the custom.

Ladies with garlands.

Banners borne by rustics.

[1] Robert Bell (1800–67), a native of Cork, was a London journalist, and editor of *The Atlas*. He was the author of *The Life of Canning*, 1846 ; and issued a famous annotated edition of the English poets.

[2] Dudley Costello (1803–65), journalist. He had been Foreign Correspondent of *The Morning Herald* and *The Daily News* ; and was one of the early contributors to *Ainsworth's Magazine* and *All the Year Round*.

[3] A full account of the evidence and counsels' speeches will be found in *The History of the Dunmow Flitch of Bacon Custom*, by William Andrews, 1877 (dedicated to Ainsworth) ; and in the account of the Ceremony, written by Lascelles Wraxall for *Bentley's Miscellany*, August, 1855, Vol. XXXVIII.

Maidens and Bachelors of the Jury in a carriage.
The Clerk and the Crier of the Court, and the
Counsel in a Carriage.
Other officers of the Court.
Gentlemen with wands, walking.
The Flitch of Bacon, garlanded with wreaths of roses, on
a frame borne by four yeomen, in antique costume.
Band.
Mr. and Mrs. Barlow, carried on a flower-decorated chair
borne on men's shoulders.
Gentlemen with wands.
Banners borne by rustics.
Two minstrels playing pipe and tabor.
The Second Flitch, decorated and carried like the former.
Band.
Le Chevalier and Madame de Chatelain
carried on a chair, like the previous couple.
Mr. Ainsworth, in a carriage.
Party of gentlemen on horseback.

The weather had now fortunately cleared, and in bright sunshine, and amid the plaudits of the crowd, the procession wended its way through Dunmow town—halting at the market cross, where proclamation was made by sound of trumpet and drum that the flitches had been adjudged and were about to be awarded—to a place called Windmill Field, where some seven thousand persons were assembled. Here the concluding portions of the ceremony were carried out. In a large tent, the successful claimants knelt down on stones prepared for them (in old days this used to take place outside the

porch of Dunmow Priory), and with due solemnity took the ancient Oath of the Flitch :—

" We do swear by custom of confession
That we ne'er made nuptial transgression ;
Nor since we were married man and wife,
By household brawls or contentious strife,
Or otherwise at bed or at board,
Offended each other in deed or word ;
Or since the parish clerk said amen,
Wished ourselves unmarried again ;
Or in a twelvemonth and a day
Repented in thought in any way,
But continued true and in desire
As when we joined in holy quire."

The oath having been taken by the two couples, the officer who administered it replied :—

" Since to these conditions, without any fear,
Of your own accord you do freely swear,
A whole flitch of bacon you shall receive,
And bear it hence with love and good leave ;
For this is our custom at Dunmow well known,
Though the pleasure be ours, the bacon's your own."

Ainsworth then presented a Flitch of Bacon to each couple.

The remainder of the day was passed in various sports and amusements, for which ample provision had been made. In the evening, Ainsworth entertained a party of about thirty gentlemen at dinner at the " Saracen's Head," and among the guests were Thomas Wright, the antiquary, W. Francis Ainsworth, Robert Bell, Dudley Costello, B. Mostyn, J. W. Kaye,[1] and Lascelles Wraxall.[2]

[1] John William Kaye (1814–76), F.R.S. Military and Indian historian. Author of *History of the Sepoy War*, etc.

[2] Sir Charles F. Lascelles Wraxall, 3rd Bart. (1828–65) ; grandson of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, the Memoir writer. Succeeded his uncle, Sir William Wraxall, in 1863. He served in the Turkish army during the Crimean War, and was the author of *The Life of Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark*, and of many military works and novels.

A haunch of venison had been presented for the dinner by Viscountess Maynard, of Easton Lodge, near Dunmow.

The revival of the Custom of the Flitch of Bacon was entirely successful, and as *The Illustrated London News* observed at the conclusion of its account of the ceremony :—

" The proceedings of the day seem to have produced a favourable impression, for they presented none of the objectionable characteristics which some people seem to have expected, while the ' performance ' itself was carried on in a much more refined style of burlesque than anyone looked for. No one could deny that there were as honest couples as in days of yore, as immaculate a jury, as good counsel, and as honest a judge, and many a good honest English yeoman, with plenty of sturdy lads and buxom lasses. A universal wish was expressed that it might be repeated another year."

It was ; two years later. On 25th June, 1857, Dunmow was again *en fête,* and Ainsworth once more presided over the proceedings in the Town Hall, when he addressed the Court as follows :—

" Two years ago we met together in this place for the purpose of reviving the good old Custom of Dunmow. And a very old Custom it is, as was then shown. Instituted in the twelfth century, it has endured for upwards of 700 years. It would be a thousand pities if an observance of such great antiquity, of a character so quaint and picturesque, and fraught with so many genial and poetical associations, should be allowed to become obsolete. Happily there is no danger of such a result. The Lord of the Manor of Little Dunmow may neglect

to keep up his charter, and refuse to furnish a Flitch of Bacon to such as shall justly demand it. The appeal will be answered here, and in this way. An estimable and kind-hearted lady, whose name, when it is revealed to them, must always be held in grateful respect by the inhabitants of Dunmow, has intimated to the authorities of the town her intention of bequeathing a sum of money sufficient for the annual celebration of the Custom of the Flitch. A noble action, and all honour to her for it. Her generosity will not be misapplied. Thousands will be made happier for the holiday fête this provision will afford them. And many a fondly-attached couple—held up by her means as examples of conjugal felicity—will have reason to bless the memory of this beneficent lady. Again, I say, all honour to her. Thus the ancient Custom of Dunmow, which it has been my good fortune to assist in reviving, may be considered as perpetuated. Whatever may have been the origin of the old Custom, whether its design was serious or jocular, or, as is more likely, a mixture of both, there can be no doubt that, viewed in a proper light, its tendencies are beneficial. A prize is offered for strict matrimonial good conduct—such good conduct to be solemnly asserted by the claimants, and confirmed by witnesses. Hence, examples are afforded best worthy of imitation of all married folk. At a season like the present, when grave and perplexing questions of divorce are agitating our legislators, we may indeed congratulate ourselves that in this quiet little town of Essex we are far more agreeably occupied in seeking to lighten the matrimonial links instead of to undo them, our grand aim being to encourage wedded love and fidelity, and obviate the necessity of divorce.

Loving couples will always find welcome and honour at Dunmow. And now in the language of an advertisement, which must have caught the eye of most of my hearers, let me address myself ' To those about to marry,' and I hope there are many such here. I do not mean to recommend to them incredibly cheap furniture, nor any other indispensable household article, but to offer them a word of advice. *Avoid your first quarrel.* In the careful observance of this precept lies the secret of conjugal happiness. Act up to it, and you will be entitled to the Dunmow Flitch."

The procedure for hearing the claim for the Flitch was similar to that of the previous occurrence; and the jury awarding the prize to Mr. and Mrs. Heard, of Bentley, Staffordshire, the bacon was duly presented to that couple by Ainsworth, after the customary procession through the town. On this occasion, several of the gentry of the locality shed the light of their countenances on the festivities, and the thunders of the Church were silent. The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to Ainsworth—carried with three rounds of cheers—who, in acknowledging the compliment, expressed the hope that they would all be present on future occasions.

Although the intended bequest for perpetuating the Custom, mentioned by Ainsworth in his address, does not appear to have been carried out, the Flitch has been presented at Dunmow on many subsequent dates, and may be said to be now firmly established beyond all fear of desuetude. There were revivals in 1869, 1874, and 1876, but Ainsworth does not seem to have been present. In later years the ceremony has been of more frequent

occurrence; and although the jocose festivities of the present day bear but little resemblance to the ritual anciently enacted at Dunmow, still, the underlying principle and spirit of the good old Custom is there, and perhaps—above the blare of the modern steam-organ—one may yet hear, faintly down the ages, the echoes of the monks' chant, as the monastic train issues from the Priory to bestow THE FLITCH OF BACON upon the happy pair. It is pleasant to know that Ainsworth, by his romance on the subject and practical help, was so largely instrumental in rescuing from oblivion and in reviving the quaint and ancient Custom of Dunmow.

CHAPTER XXII

PURCHASE OF "BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY." "THE SPENDTHRIFT." BALLADS. "OVINGDEAN GRANGE." AINSWORTH'S "DISCOVERY" OF OUIDA AND MRS. HENRY WOOD. "THE CONSTABLE OF THE TOWER."

DURING the "Fifties" Ainsworth was much occupied with the management of his magazines, and although one would have thought two properties of this description sufficient, he, in 1854, indulged in a third speculation—no less than the purchase of *Bentley's Miscellany*, the famous periodical he had edited some thirteen years earlier. The history of the transaction will be found in the following letter to Crossley:—

"BRIGHTON,
"*October 19th*, 1854.

"I am just returned from the Continent and find an invitation from Hatton [1] to meet you at dinner tomorrow. I should have liked nothing better, but I cannot start off without drawing breath, and besides I have some rather important business to attend to. . . . I have written to express my regrets to Hatton, whose sublime port I should have been very glad to taste.

"I will give you a little literary information which will surprise you, but at the same time I request you will keep it secret. I have just concluded an arrange-

[1] Joseph Hatton, of Hatton, Cheshire, who had a celebrated wine-cellar.

ment for the purchase of *Bentley's Miscellany*, so with *The New Monthly* I shall have two powerful magazines in my hands. I have given a long price (£1700 for the copyright of *Bentley's Miscellany*), but I hope in the end it will fully repay me. It was this matter which brought me back from the Continent sooner than I desired. . . . Do not mention this circumstance, especially in any literary circles, as I do not intend to have any ostensible connection with the magazine, which will continue to be published by Bentley."

At the time Ainsworth acquired *The Miscellany*, *Aspen Court*, by Shirley Brooks, was appearing serially within its pages, and to him Ainsworth wrote :—

"5, Arundel Terrace, Brighton,
"*December* 3, 1854.

"My dear Brooks,

"I am much obliged to you for your kind letter. My acquisition of *The Miscellany* was a very sudden matter, and made without much consideration. I hope I shall have a good bargain, but if I see my money back in three years, it is as much as I expect. I was just starting for Paris when I received Bentley's offer of the magazine, and on the day after my return I called upon him, and the matter was settled. I did not wish to start with the December No., but he made this a point (why, I know not)—and I yielded. I shall make arrangements with him to complete *Aspen Court* in *The Miscellany*, of which it has been the great feature—I may say the sole feature of late. The story will do well, when republished, take my word.

"When I come to town I hope you will dine with me, and we can then talk this matter over. If you run down to Brighton in search of health, I shall be delighted to see you."

After purchasing *Bentley's Miscellany*, the new owner concluded *Ainsworth's Magazine* at the close of 1854. The latter periodical had thus had a career of nearly thirteen years; but it must be confessed that in its latter days it had fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, the contributions were poor, and the brilliant illustrations which distinguished the earlier volumes had long been discontinued. It was a sad end to a once famous magazine.[1] Although Ainsworth permitted the periodical which bore his name to degenerate, he was careful to preserve the high standard of *The New Monthly*, as the following letter, to a contributor named William Pickersgill, will demonstrate :—

"BRIGHTON,
"*December* 21, 1853.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"It was my full intention to have commenced the publication of *The Last of the House* in the forthcoming *New Monthly*, but a very unexpected difficulty has arisen. I took it for granted that the tale was of equal, if not superior, merit to the many excellent tales I have received from you, and as your handwriting is peculiar, and (to me) rather illegible, I contented myself with glancing at the MS., the appearance of which confirmed my favourable opinion. Yesterday, however, I commenced upon the proofs, and was greatly disappointed and surprised to find the tale so far inferior to your former efforts. I set to work resolutely to correct it, but found, as I proceeded, that it must be rewritten. I should presume that this must be your earliest effort at

[1] It is curious to note how the most successful monthly periodicals inevitably decay and expire after a certain number of years. *Bentley's*, *Fraser's*, *Longman's*, *Ainsworth's*, *Temple Bar*, even *The New Monthly* and *The Gentleman's Magazine*—all are gone; and *Blackwood's Magazine* seems the only exception able to defy Time.

composition, since it will bear no sort of comparison with what you have subsequently done. As it stands, it would be impossible to use it in *The New Monthly*, and I am sure its appearance at all in its present state would greatly damage the reputation you have already achieved. What I would advise under the circumstances is this: Carefully revise the MS., which shall be sent to you for that purpose, and I will print the tale in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, but, I advise you to retain the pseudonym of 'Cornelius Colville.' It would require to be rewritten or remodelled for *The New Monthly*. If you prefer to send it to Messrs. Routledge, I will do so at once, and back up the offer as well as I can; but I do not think they will publish it, and, for your own sake, it really is not desirable they should. I say this frankly and as a friend. My real wish is to oblige you; but to go on with it, in its present state, would serve neither of us. From the proof I enclose you will see how I commenced. I was obliged at last to lay down the pen in despair. I assure you it has annoyed me very much—as much on your account as my own."

In 1854, *The New Monthly* reached its hundredth volume, and for this Ainsworth wrote an interesting article reviewing past editors of the old magazine and the contributions it had contained. In the "Fifties," *The New Monthly* was largely occupied with political papers by Cyrus Redding, and there was naturally a good deal of matter relating to such prominent topics as the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War. James Payn's *Ballads from English History* were included among the poetical items.

Writing to Charles Ollier on 10th April, 1854, Ainsworth says:—

"I am quite sure you have lectured most genially upon Fielding; and I wish you would deliver other lectures on Goldsmith, Smollett, and Sterne. You would correct some impressions produced by Thackeray's sneers. I am obliged to you for the offer of 'Fielding' for *The New Monthly;* but I cannot possibly avail myself of it just now. I am very reluctantly compelled to devote a large portion of my space to matters connected with the War, which is the all-engrossing subject. By and by, Fielding may be welcome."

Bentley's Miscellany also, under Ainsworth's editorship, contained a large number of political articles, and advocated Conservative principles. But there was other matter too, in the way of story and verse, the latter including a weird, curious poem by Edwin Arnold, entitled *On the —th inst. Drowned while Bathing.*

Directly Ainsworth had acquired *Bentley's*, he issued therein serially his new story, *The Spendthrift*, which commenced in January, 1855. The novel was published in one volume by Routledge in December, 1856 (despite 1857 on the title-page), with eight excellent illustrations by "Phiz." *The Spendthrift*, as its title indicates, is the story of a young rake and how he spent his great fortune in extravagance and gambling in the gay times of George II. Judging by the name of the "hero," Gage de Monthermer, who is described as the grandson of Lord Hengrave, it is probable that Ainsworth intended "Monthermer Castle, in Suffolk," to be taken as in part a picture of Hengrave Hall, in that county, the fine seat of the Gage family. From there the action of the story passes to Newmarket Heath, and thence to Bury St. Edmunds. Here there is a good description of a masked

ball at that same Angel Hotel where Mr. Pickwick stayed at a later date, and whence he issued on his gallant, but ill-fated, expedition to the Young Ladies' Boarding School, in the outskirts of the Suffolk town. After a period in London, the action of *The Spendthrift* concludes in Suffolk. The story possesses but little merit, and both plot and incident are weak.

In July, 1855, Ainsworth published, via Routledge, *Ballads: Romantic, Fantastical, and Humorous*—being a collection of the eighty-two lyrics which were scattered through his numerous romances.[1] It was a good idea to reissue them thus in a handy form, with eight charming illustrations by John Gilbert. No better collection of ballads could be desired. The diversification is extraordinary; for, as the title adumbrates, the lyrics range from the solemn and romantic, through the weird and horrible, to the jocose and merry. The Drinking Songs are perhaps the most successful of all. Ainsworth had more than a touch of the old English minstrel in his temperament; and if he had never won fame as a romancer, he would still be worthy of remembrance as an admirable ballad writer.

Some extracts from his letters of this period may now be given :—

TO JAMES CROSSLEY.

"BRIGHTON,

"*February* 2, 1855.

"What weather. You are a bold man to travel at all. None but a Philobiblian would brave the snowy blast. . . . If you like to run down here on Sunday I shall be

[1] In a later edition (1872) of the *Ballads* the lengthy *Combat of the Thirty* was added.

delighted to see you at dinner at 6 o'clock, and will give you some Southdown mutton and a good bottle of port. The line is free from snow—that's something."

"*April* 10, 1855.

"I am glad you and Parkinson like the notice of Byrom [1] in *Bentley*. I think it very good; in fact, there is no better critic than 'Monkshood.' [2] Forster would not have written the review half so genially. . . . The article on Steele in the forthcoming *Quarterly* is by Forster.

"I am going to Paris for a week with W. Francis Ainsworth, to be present at the opening of the French Exhibition on May 1st. Why can't you go with us? Make one of the party. . . ." (But, as usual, Crossley failed.)

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

"*December* 15, 1855.

"Bravo, my dear Chevalier, I can quite understand the difficulties you have experienced in translating *Charles IX at Montfaucon*,[3] but you have executed your task admirably; and I have a right to be proud of such a spirited rendering of my Ballad. *Esclairmonde* [4] was set to music by Lady Stracey, of Rackheath Park, in Norfolk, some years ago. . . ."

"*January* 1, 1856.

"You will have thought me strangely neglectful, except that you know, from experience, how much the editor of a magazine is occupied towards the end of the month. When your last obliging communication reached me I was in all the agonies of work—rather too long postponed. And this done, I had to start off at once for

[1] *The Remains of John Byrom* (from the family papers at Kersal Cell), edited for the Chetham Society by Dr. Parkinson, Canon of Manchester.

[2] W. Francis Ainsworth.

[3] From *Crichton*.

[4] From *Crichton*.

Cambridge, where what with breakfasts, dinners, and suppers (yes! suppers!) my time was fully occupied. On the road thither I passed near the scene of your July triumphs, and thought of you and the heroine of that day's adventure." [1]

TO JAMES CROSSLEY.

"*January*, 1856.

"I quite agree with you. Another year must not elapse before we meet again. Indeed, we ought to meet more frequently. Well may we exclaim '*Eheu fugaces*'! —how swiftly time fleets on.

"I have been to Cambridge for a few days, where I dined daily with the Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall, and was famously entertained. Of course you have noticed Forster's appointment.

"*January* 19, 1856.

"To-day I am going to attend a Dinner at the London Tavern, to be given to William Russell, *The Times* correspondent, on his return from the Crimea.

"*February*, 1856.

"I have been in town for the last few days. . . . *The Times*, you see, has come down upon poor Dyce (he must be a Dyce sombre, I think) for his *Table Talk*,[2] and says that it is a case for 'the literary police,' and that the executors 'ought to look to it.'

"I have been working my way, slowly and surely, through an endless list of dinners.

"*March* 1, 1856.

"I return to Brighton to-day. Poor Dyce . . . is attacked again in *The Athenæum* of to-day. He will never survive it.

[1] Winning the Flitch of Bacon at Dunmow.

[2] *Recollections of the Table Talk of Samuel Rogers*, by Alexander Dyce. It was also unfavourably noticed in *The Edinburgh Review*.

"*November*, 1856.

"Will you oblige me by communicating to the Director of the Manchester Fine Arts Exhibition that I shall be happy to send them my portrait by Pickersgill for exhibition, if they desire it.

"You can let Mr. Fairbairn know that, if he prefers it, he can have my small portrait by Maclise, instead of the full-length portrait by Pickersgill. I leave the choice to him, and will send either, or both, as desired. I have no other wish than to contribute my mite to the Exhibition. . . . The small portrait by Maclise is one of the artist's best works.

"1, WHITEHALL GARDENS,

"*November* 24, 1856.

"I am just putting the finishing strokes to *The Spendthrift*. Unless you read the articles by 'Sir Nathaniel'[1] in *The New Monthly*, and those by 'Monkshood'[1] in *Bentley*, you are unacquainted with the best magazine writer of the day.

"*May* 14*th*, 1857.

"You have never told me what you think of *Boswell's Letters*.[2] Was not that a treasure trove? In the *Bentley* for June, be sure to read an article called *The History of an unreadable book*. It is very curious—written by a D.D."

TO C. L. KENNEY.

"*January* 28, 1858.

"I have to express my regret that I cannot carry out your views in respect to the translation of Jules Saurin's work. I have no sort of doubt as to the ability and interest of the work in question, but I do not desire to mix

[1] W. Francis Ainsworth.

[2] *Letters of James Boswell to the Rev. W. J. Temple*, published by Bentley, 1857.

myself up with French politics—especially those opposed to the Imperial dynasty, of which, however humbly, I wish to be a supporter."

TO JAMES CROSSLEY.

"*April* 14, 1858.

"I am glad to learn that your portrait has found a place in the Manchester Free Library. I do not quite like the place, and should have preferred one of the older institutions, but of course you had no choice in the matter. The Presentation seems to have been conducted in a very gratifying manner, but defend me from such phrases as 'long spared to enjoy his well-earned honours' and 'may it be years before this city is deprived of the original'—phrases which, however kindly and well meant, put one unpleasantly in mind of one's latter end.''

In 1859, Ainsworth issued in *Bentley's Miscellany*, and in separate pamphlet form, a long metrical tale, entitled *The Combat of the Thirty*. This was a translation by him, from the French, of an ancient ballad, found in the Bibliothèque du Roi, detailing the famous combat between thirty English and thirty Bretons near Ploërmel, in Brittany, in 1350. In his Introduction to the translation, Ainsworth quoted an account of the combat, corroborating the details of the ballad, from a new chapter of Froissart, discovered amongst the MS. collections of the Prince de Soubise; and this was the first English publication of the extract in question from the pen of the great French chronicler. Writing to Crossley on the subject of his latest production, Ainsworth says:—

"*April* 25, 1859.

"I have just finished *The Combat of the Thirty*—the second part of which will appear in the forthcoming No. of *Bentley*. (The first part appeared in the January No.) It has cost me a good deal of trouble, for I have tried to do it well, and I hope I have succeeded. It is certainly a very curious poem, and deserves to be known in this country. . . . I should like to have your opinion of the entire poem. You have never told me what you think of the completion of *Mervyn Clitheroe*. I hope we shall meet in town this spring. Years go on very rapidly now, and we must make the most of them. . . . This War[1] is a serious matter for all of us, and I fear it is inevitable. I am afraid you want some rather better *material* for the publications of the Chetham Society. You have had no great book since *Byrom*, and the lists of forthcoming works are not very attractive."

In June, 1859, Ainsworth lost an old friend whom he had known from the days when he was a publisher over thirty years ago—Charles Ollier, and to the latter's son, Edmund Ollier, he wrote :—

"I am indeed very much shocked and very much grieved to see the announcement of the death of my old friend. . . . I had a great regard for your father and fully appreciated his ability and sterling worth of character. From circumstances he never achieved the position in literature which he ought to have obtained. He had a fine critical taste, and a genuine relish for the broadest humour, as well as a susceptibility of the tenderest pathos. He had a thoroughly masculine nature, and I never knew a man with a keener sense of existence nor one more alive to the beauties of external

[1] That between France and Sardinia and Austria in Northern Italy.

nature. He was a lover of art—indeed, a critic in art—and accomplished in music. His conversational powers on all subjects were very great; his opinions earnest and truthful; his disposition was most cheerful and kindly; and his manner engaging and cordial. So much faith had I in his friendship and judgment, that I could have said things to him which I would have said to no one else. If you would like to write a couple of pages in Memoriam of your father, I will insert them either in *Bentley's Miscellany* or *The New Monthly*. If not, I will myself devote a few lines to the memory of my lamented friend. . . ."

Writing to Charles Kent in the same year, Ainsworth said:—

"*August 4th*, 1859.

"I am delighted to hear such good accounts of Leigh Hunt. I trust his life will wear out happily to its close—and may that close be on some far distant day! Whenever we lose him we shall lose one of the most genial writers, both of prose and verse, that this country ever possessed—as well as one of the shrewdest and kindliest of critics—a man who always tried to see good in everything. I have been specially delighted of late with his worthily-appreciative sketch of poor Charles Ollier.[1] Ollier merited this sketch, for he revered Hunt. . . .

"When you see the veteran poet remember me most kindly to him, and shake him for me by the hand. I return you his delightful letter, which proves how well you have pleased him . . . every word from whose pen is precious as a gem. . . ."

"*October 12th*, 1859.

"I do not think that you need have any scruples in giving your tender reminiscences of Leigh Hunt. The family will be pleased, I am sure, with what you will do,

[1] George Meredith also thought very highly of Charles Ollier.

written, as it will be, in a spirit of love and respect for the departed poet.[1] So do not hesitate on that score. . . .

" Many thanks for your kind promise to say a serviceable word for *The Combat of the Thirty*, which I believe to be my best ballad. I want to get it known, and it is difficult to make the public look at a poem nowadays."

And later he added :—

" Hearty commendation like yours is not only exceedingly gratifying, but incites one to higher endeavours, and if I do something better than *The Combat of the Thirty*, of which you have spoken so handsomely, it will be mainly owing to the stimulant you have given me."

In August, 1859, Ainsworth paid a visit to Manchester to look up old friends, and where he had a pleasant time —" only we lived *too* jollily," as he told Crossley. From thence he went abroad for his usual summer continental tour. On returning in October, he writes to M. Charles Fournier concerning a proposed translation of his (Ainsworth's) works in Belgium :—

" I am much disappointed at the ill-success of your application to Messrs. Hachette and Lanure. I am not aware that any copyright exists by which Messrs. Hachette and Lanure can prevent a translation of any of my works from being published in Belgium. So far as I am concerned, therefore, I readily give you my full authorization to translate any of them you please for any journal in Bruxelles—*seulement, comme vous dites, Monsieur, pour le Belgique.* In a few days I will send you the early chapters of a new romance which I am about to bring out in one of the monthly reviews under

[1] Leigh Hunt had died in the interval between the two letters quoted above.

my direction. It will be continued for about six months, and you might translate it simultaneously in your journal at Bruxelles. . . ."

This new romance was *Ovingdean Grange*, which appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany* from November, 1859, to July, 1860. On its completion there, it was published by Routledge, with eight illustrations by "Phiz." Like so many of its predecessors, the story was translated on the Continent; and a dramatic version of *Ovingdean Grange* was produced in London, at the Surrey Theatre, in 1861.

As previously mentioned, after Ainsworth's removal to Brighton, he spent much of his time rambling over the beautiful Downs which almost adjoined his house at Kemp Town. His favourite spot was Ovingdean—that delightful little hamlet, with its Grange and quaint church, which nestles so peacefully in a wooded hollow of the Downs that sweep away in green undulations to the horizon. Every Sunday Ainsworth walked over to Ovingdean Church for service—just as he used to go over the fields to Willesden Church in the old days at Kensal—and so this Sussex tale, which was laid in his parish, was inscribed "To the Rev. Alfred Stead, Rector of Ovingdean, by One of his Flock." [1]

Ovingdean Grange is perhaps the prettiest of Ainsworth's stories: it does not essay any high flights to terrible scenes, and is simply a charming, unaffected tale of English life in the days of Cavalier and Roundhead. But it is a dramatic little story nevertheless—in keeping

[1] Ainsworth wrote to Charles Kent: "It delights me to learn that you like *Ovingdean Grange*. We must have a walk together over these Downs, and I will show you all the localities of the story."

with the stirring period to which it relates; and the continuous flow of vivid incident, and the adventures and hairbreadth escapes of the characters, are reminiscent of the brilliant methods which were seen at their best in *Guy Fawkes*.

Ovingdean Grange is notable for its picturesque descriptions of the scenery of the South Downs—and a wide stretch of country the author pictures. From Ovingdean itself, where, in exquisitely expressed phrases, he lingers over the little church he loved so well, he passes to the beautiful down-land around Lewes, and then to the more splendid panorama of the Weald of Sussex as seen from the high ground above Poynings. Here Ainsworth introduced the quaint Legend of the Devil's Dyke[1]—the extraordinary chasm situated in this portion of the Downs. Then there is the Night Ride to Newhaven and the ancient "Star" Inn at Alfriston, and, finally, Charles the Second's ride from the Chichester district to Brighton, on his escape from England, in October, 1651. Unfortunately, there is no proof that the King visited Ovingdean Grange as Ainsworth described; and, indeed, it is quite unlikely that Charles made a detour of some miles out of his direct route from Bramber to Brighton at a time so hazardous to his life.

It is true that at Ovingdean there is a long-established and credited belief that the fugitive King did come to the village;[2] but the tradition probably arose from the fact

[1] Ainsworth's version of this Legend, accompanied by illustrations of the Devil's Dyke, was reprinted in two small volumes issued in 1862 and 1876 respectively.

[2] The Beard family, who are supposed to be descended from the characters of that name described in *Ovingdean Grange*, possessed a china bowl said to have been drunk from by Charles II, when at Ovingdean.

that the Grange was at one time occupied by Francis Mansel, the owner of the brig, "The Surprise" (commanded by Captain Tattersel), on which Charles II escaped to France.[1] Mansel naturally suggested "Maunsel"—the name Ainsworth bestowed on the occupants of Ovingdean Grange in his story, which keeps more closely to facts than most romances dealing with the wanderings of Charles II after the Battle of Worcester. Walter Scott, indeed, took the King as far as Woodstock, which was, of course, fiction. However, it was possibly this romance of *Woodstock* which suggested *Ovingdean Grange* to Ainsworth, for there are many points of resemblance in the two stories. In each there is an old cavalier who shelters and hides the fugitive king in his house; and whose establishment includes a dispossessed clergyman, a pert waiting-maid,—Phœbe Mayflower and Patty Whinchat are certainly near relations,—and a Royalist maiden beloved by a Roundhead officer.

Ovingdean Grange has unfortunately been modernized out of all resemblance to the picturesque Tudor mansion of red brick which Ainsworth so well described. A hideous stucco front now masks the old house, though

[1] My friend Mr. Allan Fea informs me that at the date in question, 1651, Ovingdean Grange was occupied by the Geer family, and that Francis Mansel probably resided there soon after the Restoration. With regard to the George Inn, at Brighton, where Charles II waited before embarking on "The Surprise," and which is supposed to have stood on the site of the present King's Head Inn in West Street, Mr. Fea states that there is no record among the Brighton Court Rolls of such an inn until 1754; but that on the east side of Middle Street there was an inn named the "George" at the time in question. Mr. Fea thinks that, perhaps, when the latter building was pulled down, the new "George" in West Street took over the traditions and honours of the original house. In any case, the West Street inn possessed the relics of the King's visit, including the bedstead and chair he used; but all the articles connected with the event were sold many years ago.

at the back some idea of the original appearance of the place may still be obtained. Inside, the oak panelling and stained-glass windows of yore are gone; but the entrance—now blocked up—to the hiding-place for distressed priests and cavaliers in the troublous days of old is plainly visible.

Ainsworth revivifies for us the romantic past in Ovingdean whenever we read his romance, and to preserve the illusion it is, perhaps, best not to visit the actual spot and see the changes which Time has wrought. But the beautiful Downs remain ever the same, though the Celt, the Roman, the Saxon, the Cavalier, who lived their lives, or fought and died, on those green, rolling expanses are but a shadowy memory.

To celebrate the publication of *Ovingdean Grange*, Ainsworth, as usual, entertained his literary friends to dinner, in June, 1860, and later in the summer he set out on a tour through France and Spain. This same year was a very eventful one for the magazines he owned.

It is not generally known that Ainsworth "discovered" Ouida,[1] and that it was under his guidance and editorship that the late talented novelist commenced her literary career in the pages of *Bentley's Miscellany*. Miss de la Ramé was then nineteen years of age. She lived at Hammersmith, where her neighbour and medical attendant was Dr. Francis W. Ainsworth, who, it is probable, introduced the young writer to his cousin, the proprietor and editor of two magazines. Ouida's first contribution, to *Bentley's*, 1859, was a short story entitled *Dashwood's Drag; or the Derby and what came*

[1] Louise de la Ramé (1840–1908) was the daughter of a Guernsey man by an English wife—a Miss Lockwood, of Bury St. Edmunds, where the future novelist was born.

of it. So pleased was Ainsworth with this, and so convinced of the abilities of the new writer, that before the end of the following year he had accepted and published seventeen additional tales from the same pen. Each story consisted of about six chapters; and the titles—such as *The Donkeyshire Militia; Belles and Blackcock; Coaches and Cousinship; Fleurs-de-Lys and the Two Viscounts;* etc.—will demonstrate that this early work of Ouida's dealt with the same phases of rather dubious military and society life as her brilliant, well-known novels of a later date. Although they have, apparently, never been reprinted, it was these short stories which brought the young authoress her first fame, and by the end of 1860 she was one of the chief attractions in *Bentley's Miscellany.* In his *Epilogue* to the magazine for the year just mentioned Ainsworth wrote: "We offer not our own opinion, but that of a host of critical commentators, when we say that few periodical writers have suddenly achieved a greater success than the contributor who has chosen the fanciful designation of 'Ouida'; [1] whose sketches of society, both in England and on the Continent, are as graceful as they are accurate." During the next two years Ouida contributed to *Bentley's* a dozen more of her dashing little stories with equally flaring titles—*The Marquis's Tactics; Taming of the Pythoness;* and so on. At the same time, Ainsworth engaged the new writer for more important work for *The New Monthly Magazine,* and here, in 1861–3, appeared Ouida's first long novel, *Granville de Vigne,* better known as *Held in Bondage,* the title adopted when the story was

[1] The pseudonym is said to have been suggested to Miss de la Ramé by a child's attempt at the pronunciation of her Christian name, Louisa.

republished in 1863. This was followed by the famous *Strathmore*, which concluded in *The New Monthly* for February, 1865, and then came the powerful romance, *Idalia*, 1865–7. The original title of the last-named was changed at Ainsworth's request, as will be seen in the following letter to its author :—

"5, Arundel Terrace, Brighton,
"*December* 18, 1864.

"My dear Miss Ramé,[1]

"I do not like the title *The Lady of his Dreams*. It might do very well as the title of a poem, especially of the Tennysonian school, which I abominate, but it is too lackadaisical for a novel. If you can find nothing better, give it the name of the hero or heroine. As far as the Magazine is concerned, I should wish the second title, *A Love Tale*, to be omitted. You can add this when you republish the story. I think I understood from you that *Strathmore* will not be concluded till the February No. of *The New Monthly*. Is it so? With Compliments."

Mrs. Henry Wood[2] was another celebrated lady novelist "discovered" by Ainsworth, in whose magazines she, like Ouida and Mrs. Lynn Linton, commenced her literary career. According to her son's account of the matter,[3] Mrs. Wood contributed anonymously for some years short stories to *Bentley's* and *The New Monthly*

[1] Ainsworth spells the name thus both in the letter and on the envelope: Ouida changed it to Ramée later. Ouida, at the time she was writing *Strathmore*, *Idalia*, etc., was living at Bessborough House, Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith.

[2] Ellen, daughter of Thomas Price, of Worcester, married Henry Wood, of the consular service, in 1836, and spent many years abroad. Mrs. Wood died in 1887.

[3] *Memorials of Mrs. Henry Wood*, by Charles W. Wood, 1894.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH, IN THE SIXTIES.
From a photograph.

for which she, at first, received no payment, but that after a time £60 was paid annually to her for the numerous tales she supplied. This parsimonious arrangement was in strange contrast to Ainsworth's customary ways, for, without exception, the records of his transactions with his other magazine contributors demonstrate that he was ever over-generous in payment, and did all in his power to advance the interests of new and unknown writers: we have seen previously what pains he took with Overs, Miss Meteyard, and W. Pickersgill, to name but three out of many.[1]

With regard to Mrs. Henry Wood, Ainsworth, it seems, preferred short stories to a long novel from her pen; but Mrs. Wood was anxious to write a serial tale, and, at last, declaring she would provide no more short stories, commenced *East Lynne*, which Ainsworth accepted for *The New Monthly Magazine*, wherein this famous story appeared from January, 1860, to September, 1861, anonymously—"By the author of *Ashley*." Curiously enough, *East Lynne* did not at first attract much attention, and, in fact—as in the history of other celebrated novels—there was considerable difficulty in finding a publisher to issue the work in book form. It was first offered to Chapman and Hall, and Ainsworth called twice to advise their acceptance of the MS., which was, however, declined on the report of their Reader, George Meredith. Ainsworth, who had the highest opinion of *East Lynne* and fully perceived its prospects of future success, urged Chapman and Hall to look at the story again. They did; and so convinced were the publishers of its merits, that they returned the MS. to

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 390, and Vol. II, pp. 132, 220.

the Reader for further consideration—a very unusual proceeding—but Meredith, who was somewhat didactic to his employers, again refused it.[1] The MS. was next sent to Smith and Elder, who returned it, apparently unread. Finally, *East Lynne* was accepted by Bentley, and it proved to be one of his most profitable productions. (The sales of the novel were—and are—immense; and now that the copyright has run out, considerably more than a million copies have been issued.) As Ainsworth said to Mrs. Henry Wood, on one occasion when she was visiting him: "Chapman and Hall have never ceased to repent . . . they publish a work that has no chance of success . . . and when such a book as *East Lynne* is brought under their notice they pass it over. I was never more amazed than when Frederic Chapman told me they had returned it to you." "Yet I had great difficulty in persuading you to let me write it," replied Mrs. Henry Wood. "Why were you so unwilling that I should write a novel?" Ainsworth laughed, and said: "Your short stories were so good that I could desire nothing better. And they were so popular that the magazines could not get on without them."

After *East Lynne*, Mrs. Henry Wood wrote one more

[1] Meredith could see nothing good in *East Lynne*, and wrote, in 1862, to S. Lucas, the editor of *Once a Week*:—

". . . I have read *East Lynne*, and also your notice of it. I have read the latter with almost less pleasure than the novel. It is (the novel) in the worst style of the present taste. What a miserable colourless villain, Levison: the husband a respectable stick: the heroine a blotched fool: all the incidents forced—that is, not growing out of the characters: and the turning-point laughable in its improbability. Why do you foster this foul taste? There's action in the tale, and that's all. This manufacture is supplied by *The London Journal*. I don't deride it by any means. . . .

"GEORGE MEREDITH."

work—*The Shadow of Ashlydyat*—especially for Ainsworth, who paid £60 for the serial rights in *The New Monthly*, where the story appeared during 1861–3. Ainsworth thought the title one of the most effective he had ever heard, and Mrs. Wood herself considered this novel to be her best production. She was always very much obliged to Ainsworth for one valuable piece of advice he gave her, and which she strictly followed—never to part with her copyrights.

Ainsworth's next romance from his own pen, *The Constable of the Tower*, appeared in *Bentley's* during 1861, and was published the same year, in three volumes, by Chapman and Hall. John Gilbert furnished six illustrations, and these—like most of his and H. K. Browne's designs for Ainsworth's novels—were engraved by the famous Brothers Dalziel. Writing to the latter, in October, 1860, Ainsworth says :—

"... I agree to your terms—8 guineas each for engraving Mr. John Gilbert's drawings illustrative of my romance, *The Constable of the Tower*—it being understood that the engravings are to be executed in your best style. I am also willing to confide the printing of the cuts to you, as I feel assured that you will do full justice to them ... there will be only one engraving given per month. ... I have not yet written any portion of the story, and shall scarcely be able to supply Mr. Gilbert with the first subject before the 20th November. I have always thought Mr. Gilbert's illustrations to *The Lancashire Witches* admirable and very charmingly engraved; and I have no doubt the proposed cuts will equal them, if not surpass them, in beauty."

In historical chronology, the period of *The Constable*

of the Tower (represented by Sir John Gage) falls between those times depicted by Ainsworth in *Windsor Castle* and *The Tower of London*, and it really forms an introduction to the last-named work. It opens with a description of the last days and death of Henry VIII, and a vivid account of the remarkable pageantry with which the king's funeral was celebrated. Then follows the Coronation of Edward VI; and the rest of the tale passes during his reign, being chiefly concerned with the ambitious plots of the king's uncles (brothers of Jane Seymour), who became Duke of Somerset and Lord Seymour, the latter marrying Queen Catherine Parr. As is well known, both brothers were executed during the reign of their pious young nephew, whose piety did not prevent him from calmly consenting to the deaths of his uncles; indeed, of the elder he said, "It were better that he should die," and on the day of the Lord Protector's execution the affectionate nephew callously noted in his journal: "The Duke of Somerset had his head cut off upon Tower Hill." A curious youth, certainly.

In *The Constable of the Tower*, Ainsworth reintroduced his old characters, Xit and the three giant warders, from *The Tower of London*, and the story possesses much of the narrative force of the author's earlier works. He himself wrote of *The Constable of the Tower* to Charles Kent:—

"I think I am in a tolerably good vein with this Tale, as I work to my own satisfaction, which is not always the case with me. . . . How much I am indebted to you for your earnest kindness in regard to *The Constable of the Tower*. I hope you really like the book. In my own

opinion it is one of my best, if not the best. But an author cannot judge of his own productions. . . . It is rather a curious coincidence that the lengthened description of Henry the Eight's funeral should appear almost simultaneously with the Duchess of Kent's interment. This, I need scarcely say, has not been got up for the occasion. But it is strange. . . . So you have stood over the grave of poor Catherine Parr. I wish I had time to run down to Sudley."

On 27th August, 1861, Ainsworth's youngest daughter, Blanche, was married at the old parish church of St. Nicholas, Brighton, to Captain Francis Swanson, of the Royal Artillery.[1]

Mention has often been made in this work of the remarkable friendship which existed from boyhood to old age between Ainsworth and James Crossley. Through all the sixty-five years of their intimacy there seems to have been but one serious disagreement or coolness; this occurred in 1861, and was happily not of long duration, for they would not let Christmas pass without a reconciliation. Writing to his old companion, Ainsworth said:—

"On all accounts I am very glad to receive your letter. . . . There is indeed something sacred in a friendship which has extended from early youth to a period almost verging on old age, which ought not to be lightly

[1] Col. Swanson died in 1877. There were three children of the marriage:—

1. Apphia, who married, I, Major H. M. Richards in 1893 (he died 1896); and II, in 1897, Major K. R. Mackenzie, who was killed at Magersfontein, 1899.

2. Frank, Captain, 76th Duke of Wellington's Regiment; died of fever during service in South Africa, 1897.

3. John, Captain, 27th Worcester Regiment, retired.

broken. For my own part, I can safely assert that, during the whole of this lengthened term, my regard for you has been unshaken. . . . That such a friendship as ours, which has existed for nearly a life, and which has been cemented by kindred tastes and pursuits, should be even temporarily interrupted is to be regretted; and no one can regret the interruption more than I have done. Which of the two has been to blame for this I will not now stop to inquire. You have held out the hand of an old friend to me, and I shall not hesitate to grasp it. . . . Let us commence the year with the determination of passing as many happy hours together as we can in the course of it. With this I send you a photograph of your old friend, such as he was in the autumn of the present year. . . .

"Ever cordially yours."

The old relations were never again disturbed after this. Ainsworth was indeed singularly fortunate in his greatest friend. Crossley was the most generous and unselfish of men, always ready to help by every means in his power; unassuming and retiring, though possessed of great knowledge. Professionally, too, he was a very able lawyer; and both Disraeli and Dickens strongly pressed him to remove to London in order to act as their permanent legal adviser. But Crossley could not tear himself away from Manchester, where he had lived from youth, and, indeed, the packing and removing of his vast library of about 100,000 volumes[1]—which were piled up in stacks in every room of his house—would have been enough to make any man pause, to say nothing of one so procrastinating as Ainsworth's old comrade. In his

[1] The sale in 1884–5 (after his death) of the more valuable portions of his library, at Sotheby's, alone occupied sixteen days.

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JAMES CROSSLEY.
From a photograph, about 1870, in the possession of Mr. C. W. Sutton, and enlarged by Mr. W. Ellis.

latter years (he lived till 1883), Crossley was the most remarkable and picturesque figure in Manchester. Enveloped in a long, dark-coloured cloak, his white hair fell to his shoulders from beneath a broad-brimmed hat, and his manners were those of days gone by. He loved old books, old wine, old friends, old times; and attributed his longevity to port, celibacy, and never indulging in snuff or tobacco. He was an admirable after-dinner speaker, and it was then that he narrated his most interesting reminiscences of the past. It is curious that such a very learned man as Crossley did not achieve a larger literary output and fame. It is true he contributed to many works and was an admirable editor, but he did not produce any memorable book of his own. He evidently belonged to that remarkable class of clever men who from diffidence, or indifference, procrastinate the publication of their science and research to the world.[1]

Unlike his old friend, Ainsworth could not be accused of this unfortunate reserve. For thirty years now the public had been enjoying the products of his fruitful mind, and, at last, official recognition of his services to literature came to him in the form of a Civil List Pension of £100 a year, which was granted to Ainsworth in October, 1856, on the recommendation of the Premier, Lord Palmerston. It was a well-earned reward.

[1] Dr. William Osler has pointed out that this reticence of knowledge has been a strongly marked mental feature in many great men. Copernicus delayed issuing his treatise on Revolution for thirty years, and, similarly, Harvey postponed for twelve years the publication of his wonderful discoveries relating to the circulation of the blood. Darwin, too, after evolving his *Origin of Species*, did not publish his work until twenty years later.

CHAPTER XXIII

TEN YEARS AND ELEVEN BOOKS. REMOVAL TO TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND HURSTPIERPOINT: A RETIRED LIFE.

FOLLOWING *The Constable of the Tower*, Ainsworth's next story, *The Lord Mayor of London*, appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany* throughout 1862, and was published the same year, in three volumes, by Chapman and Hall.[1] The work presents a very interesting record of the civic customs and famed hospitality of the City of London, which the author was well able to describe from his personal acquaintance with many City magnates and frequent attendance at Lord Mayors' banquets. He, however, laid the period of his story in 1761, the year the youthful George III and his Queen viewed the Lord Mayor's Show in Cheapside and afterwards feasted with their citizens in Guildhall; and at this date, also, the picturesque procession of the Lord Mayor to Westminster by water, in the state barges, was a prominent feature of the spectacle on 9th November. In addition to the Royal Family, many public characters, such as Lord Bute, Wilkes, and Alderman Beckford, figure in the story.

Very appropriately, the book was inscribed to William

[1] The one volume edition, issued by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

Cubitt, who had the rare distinction of being twice elected Lord Mayor of London, and in the course of his dedicatory letter Ainsworth said :—

" The principal character in my tale, it is almost needless to observe, is imaginary. Sir Gresham Lorimer is simply, as I have intimated, my idea of a worthy Lord Mayor. If any points of resemblance should be discovered between him and your lordship, they are accidental ; though I may have been unconsciously influenced in the portraiture by the living model.

" Hitherto, Aldermen and Common-Councilmen have been a standing jest with dramatists, novelists, and comic writers, who have made them their butt, burlesqued their proceedings, and caricatured their manners. Such is not the course I have pursued. Knowing the municipal authorities to be generally men of sterling character, of high intelligence and capacity, zealous in the discharge of their public duties, and energetic in the maintenance of the rights and privileges of the great city they represent, I have painted them as such."

Ainsworth's passion for accuracy in even the smallest details relating to the subjects described in his books is evidenced by some letters to Mr. Howman Smith, a City friend, written at the time he was working at *The Lord Mayor of London*:—

" BRIGHTON,

" *January 4th*, 1862.

" Our friend, Costello, has forwarded me your letter to him, relative to my story, *The Lord Mayor*, and I cannot resist telling you how much I have been gratified by it. Your opinion on a tale of this kind, which is

especially addressed to those interested in City matters, is very valuable, and your praise gives me great encouragement. My design, as you have not failed to perceive, is to portray a very worthy citizen who has risen to his high office by good conduct and integrity. Many such have adorned the Civic Chair. The coincidence as to Sir Gresham's domicile [1] and the house occupied by your worthy father is exceedingly curious. It certainly was not designed on my part, but I am glad I have made so good a hit accidentally. For any hints or suggestions with which you may be disposed to furnish me, I shall be greatly beholden, and if it is not giving you too much trouble, I will ask you to jot down a few memoranda. No details can be too minute, or apparently too trivial for my purpose. Dresses of all officers, such as City Marshals, carvers, sergeants of the chamber, would help me. I should like to know something of the private life of the Mansion House, and of the life below stairs, if you know anything about it. Any hints you can give me will be useful, and shall be turned to account. Has the Lord Mayor's state coachman any particular costume? I have a notion that he wears a postillion's cap —or is this merely assumed on particular occasions? I remember seeing such a personage in the entrance hall of the Mansion House, amongst the other attendants."

"I am greatly obliged both to yourself and Mrs. Howman Smith for the trouble you have taken for me. Your suggestions will be very useful. I am also obliged by your kind offer to lend me Hubert's *History of the City Companies;* but I have the book. Indeed, I have almost every book, ancient or modern, relating to London. At present, my tables groan beneath their weight. The Lord Mayor's state coach you will find elaborately described in next No."

[1] At the corner of Cheapside and Queen Street.

In connection with this book, and Ainsworth's description therein of how the King and Queen witnessed the Lord Mayor's Show from Mr. Barclay's house in Cheapside, it is interesting to note that some fine, old oak panelling from No. 108, Cheapside, was sold in 1861, when the auctioneer stated that the wood came from a room frequently honoured by royalty in the past, when viewing the Lord Mayor's Show. The purchaser, Mr. Morris Charles Jones, had these oak panels removed to his property, Gungrog, near Welshpool; and a year later, after reading Ainsworth's *Lord Mayor of London*, he wrote to the author, detailing the purchase he had made, and received the following reply:—

"5, ARUNDEL TERRACE,
BRIGHTON,
"*November 22nd*, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"From what you state, I have no doubt the oak wainscoting which you have purchased came from Mr. Barclay's house in Cheapside, whence George III and Queen Charlotte viewed the Lord Mayor's Show in 1761. In *The Annual Register* for that year there is a letter from an eye-witness of the ceremonies, describing both the ceremonies and the banquet at Guildhall, in which special mention is made of Mr. Barclay's house, *opposite to Bow Church;* thus fixing the position. And in a report presented to the Common Council in June, 1762, this passage occurs: 'Their majesties having expressed their royal inclinations to see the procession of the Lord Mayor's Show, the committee obtained Mr. Barclay's house, in Cheapside, for that purpose.' The auctioneers were quite correct in stating that the house in question had been honoured by the presence of royalty; and it

may be fairly assumed that the fine oak panelling now in your possession adorned the walls of the apartment from the balcony of which their majesties viewed the cavalcade. Having no doubt of the matter myself, I congratulate you on your acquisition, and I am extremely glad that the panels adapt themselves so well to your house in Montgomeryshire. By reference to *The Annual Register* for 1761, p. 236, and to Malcolm's *Manners and Customs of London*, p. 193, you will find the authorities for what I have stated. My original impression was that Mr. Barclay belonged to the well-known family of brewers; but I fancy I have since ascertained that such was not the case.[1]

"I remain, yours faithfully,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

Mr. Morris Jones extended his research into the history of Mr. Barclay's house, and embodied the result in a paper entitled *Reminiscences connected with old oak panelling*, which he contributed to *Bentley's Miscellany*, in 1864; and established the fact that Charles II and five subsequent English sovereigns had visited this same old building, No. 108, Cheapside, in order to view from it the procession of the Lord Mayor's Show.

Bentley's Miscellany for 1862 contained what was called "The Unpublished Ingoldsby Legend," being some verses—*The Bulletin*—written by Barham in May, 1845, during his last illness. In sending them to Ainsworth, "Ingoldsby's" son, the Rev. R. H. D. Barham, wrote: "*The Bulletin* was struck off during one of those gleams of cheerfulness which bodily pain could not extinguish . . . with him the difficulty was—not to write!

[1] This Barclay was a linendraper; it was his son who bought Thrales' Brewery and founded the firm of Barclay, Perkins, and Co.

. . . I cannot but feel that of all classes of readers that which comprises the ' following ' of *Bentley's Miscellany* has certainly the first claim to be presented with anything that fell from the pen of Thomas Ingoldsby."

Ainsworth always wished his own works to find their way to the old haunt of his boyhood, Chetham's Library ; and in 1862, when sending copies of *Rookwood, Crichton, Ballads,* etc., he wrote : " Ere long I mean to send a complete set of my works. The Chetham Library is a proper receptacle for them."

Crossley came to London in the summer of this year, and the two friends had some pleasant dinners out at the " Star and Garter," Richmond, the Crystal Palace, and Greenwich—resorts which were then at the height of their popularity, but which, in these latter days of motors, have now fallen from their high estate of fashion.

In the summer of 1863, Ainsworth went for a six weeks' tour to Switzerland and the Italian Lakes ; and this year witnessed the production of a new romance from his pen, *Cardinal Pole,* which was issued serially in *Bentley's,* and published in July by Chapman and Hall in three volumes.[1] The work was inscribed to the author's friend, Mr. Edward Watkin-Edwards. The period of this book is in immediate sequence to *The Tower of London,* and several characters from the latter —such as Xit and the three giant warders—reappear once more. The story is primarily concerned with the marriage of Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain ; and after a description of the Prince's landing at Southampton

[1] The one volume edition, published by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

and the appearance of that port in 1554, there is a charming picture of Winchester, where the royal espousals were celebrated. Then there is an account of Lambeth Palace under the regime of Cardinal Pole—hence the title of the book—the son of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury (last of the Plantagenets), and grand-nephew of Edward IV, and one of the best examples of a royal priest. Finally, *Cardinal Pole* gives a glimpse of the fires of Smithfield and the burning of the Sussex martyr, Derrick Carver, at Lewes.[1]

Though verging on sixty, Ainsworth was working as hard as he did twenty years earlier, and his pen was never idle. But the pecuniary returns were no longer what they were in those halcyon days, and this, combined with other reasons, led him to sell his birthplace, 21, King Street, Manchester, and the early home, "Beech Hill." The former house went, indeed, in 1860, and, although he received £5500 as the purchase price, he evidently parted with regret from this link with his happy boyhood—the scene of those youthful, ambitious dramas performed in the subterranean theatre—for he wrote to Crossley: "I elect to sell. . . . I shall not shrink from the trial at the last moment." The sale was a terrible mistake, for, a few years later, the value of the house greatly increased, as King Street became a centre of business activity, and had Ainsworth kept his Manchester properties, he would have enjoyed a handsome competence in his old age. But he did not foresee this at the time he decided to part with the houses, and

[1] Ainsworth wrote of *Cardinal Pole* to Charles Kent: "It will be my own fault if the present story is not good, for I have excellent materials for it."

he thought their disposal would free him from financial anxieties in the future. So "Beech Hill" followed his birthplace four years later. Writing to Crossley, in March, 1864, he said:—

". . . Considering how time is stealing on you will not wonder at my anxiety to sell the property. . . . For several years I have been obliged to work exceedingly hard, and the strain is almost too much for me, and I may break down. It is only prudent, therefore, to relax these excessive exertions, but as I now stand I cannot do so. Of course I should be glad to get more for the property, but I will take £3000 for it. . . . I shall consider what you do for me in this matter as a *great act of friendship*, and I feel sure you will be glad to serve me, and to help to lighten my labours. . . . I would run down to Manchester . . . but I am so busy that I cannot leave my desk, and I shall not have finished the work I am engaged on at present—*John Law*—before 10th June."

So the old home was sacrificed, and Laman Blanchard's anticipation, penned when his subject was at the apex of success, was never fulfilled: "And when the home of his childhood shall again be his, may he find the end, like the beginning—with its 'vision splendid' turned to a reality."[1] The splendid vision of the early time had indeed been realised, but now it was fading like the after-glow of a brilliant sunset. It is a pathetic task to trace the gradual declension of a talented writer to mediocrity, from prosperity to reduced conditions of means: yet such must inevitably be the course of events with an author who, when his pristine powers are becoming exhausted, is compelled by circumstances

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 29.

to continue writing as actively in his advancing years as in the days of his prolific youth.

However, Ainsworth in the "Sixties" was by no means at the end of his resources, either literary or financial; and, considering he regularly produced a new novel every year, the standard he preserved in his rapid succession of stories was very high. *John Law*, indeed, commenced in *Bentley's* when *Cardinal Pole* was still appearing there, and it was published, in three volumes, by Chapman and Hall in 1864.[1]

In this "Biographical Romance," as he styled it, Ainsworth succeeded in presenting an interesting picture of the meteoric career of the clever Scotchman, John Law, who, after failing to obtain attention for his plans in London, went to Paris, and there, in 1715–6, by his extraordinary paper-money and Mississippi schemes, created a financial mania, which rapidly raised him to supreme wealth and power and as rapidly cast him down again. The Regent Orleans and his evil genius, Dubois, are among the characters of the book; there is a dramatic description of the murder of Lacroix; and other varied incidents generated by Law's financial schemes in the early days of the reign of Louis XV are effectively introduced.

Memories of youthful frays[2]—long forgotten by the participants—are revived by the following letter from Ainsworth to Crossley:—

"*April* 14, 1864.

"I have just received a letter from old Cyrus Redding giving me an account of the death of our friend Alaric

[1] The one volume edition of 1881, published by Routledge, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert. [2] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 127.

Watts, which may interest you. Cyrus says: 'You knew Alaric Watts—I had known him forty years—a singular man. He called upon me a few days ago, and I saw he was very infirm. I remarked it. "Yes," he said, "my limbs go, but I hope I shall preserve my head, and I don't care." He fell with an apoplectic stroke while getting out of an omnibus, lay for two days in a comatose state, and died on Monday. So go off the old stagers. He was ten years younger than I am. *Eheu fugaces!*'

"How many years is it since he dined with you, and recited those lines from *The Ancient Mariner*—'We were the first that ever burst Into that silent sea'?"

In the summer of 1864 Ainsworth, as usual, went abroad—to Switzerland and Paris; and on his return, immediately commenced preparations for a new story from his pen. This dealt with the romantic and secret expedition of Charles I (when Prince of Wales) to Madrid, in 1623, in the endeavour to win the Infanta Maria for his bride. As is well known, the project was brought to naught by the machinations of the Papacy, who made the conversion of the Prince to the Roman Church a condition of the marriage, and the behaviour of Buckingham. Ainsworth presented a most picturesque chronicle of the royal knight-errant's hazardous journey—accompanied only by Buckingham and two attendants—through France and Spain, and he introduced many exciting adventures with brigands and so forth. At Paris he described how Charles met, at a court ball, for the first time, the Princess Henriette Marie, who was destined eventually to become his wife. The excellent pictures of the scenery of France and Spain—of the Great Landes, of the Somosierra—and of towns like Bordeaux

and Burgos, were the fruit of the author's many continental tours, and remarkable powers of observation and memory of the picturesque. Finally, at Madrid, he had unlimited opportunities for exercising his skill in depicting gorgeous ceremonial and resplendent costume, for the entertainments given by Philip IV in honour of the Prince of Wales have seldom been excelled in magnificence: Ainsworth gave a most spirited description of the royal Bull-Fight. In the character of the Infanta Maria he found another suitable subject for his favourite study of the power of bigotry upon the female heart, for there is little doubt that the Spanish princess sacrificed her brilliant prospects as Queen of England rather than wed one whom she failed to convert to the faith which she considered paramount to all else. Ainsworth's romance on this curious incident in history was at first entitled *The House of Seven Chimneys* (the place where the Prince of Wales stayed on his arrival in Madrid incognito), during its appearance in *Bentley's Miscellany*, November, 1864, to September, 1865; but in the latter year, when the story was published, in three volumes, by Chapman and Hall, the title was changed to *The Spanish Match.*[1] The work was dedicated to the author's friend, Mr. James Beazley, of Liverpool.

In the summer of 1865 Ainsworth went on a trip to Killarney and the south of Ireland, whence he proceeded to Switzerland. On his return, he actively exerted himself in obtaining a Government pension for the widow of his friend, Sir Lascelles Wraxall,[2] in consideration of the

[1] The one volume edition, published by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

[2] See *ante*, p. 213.

latter's services to literature—particularly in military history—and Ainsworth succeeded in securing the co-operation of, among others, the Bishop of Oxford, Anthony Trollope, and Frederic Chapman. Writing to Octavius Blewitt on this matter, Ainsworth said :—

" *October*, 1865.

" You have, I hear, been kind enough to say, that if a literary friend of the late Sir Lascelles Wraxall would write to advocate Lady Wraxall's claims to a small Government pension, you would draw up the necessary Petition to have her name placed on the Civil List, and get it signed by the Council of the Literary Fund. In my opinion Lady Wraxall is well entitled to such a pension not only as the widow of a distinguished literary man, who died without making her any provision, and left her only a barren title ; but in consideration of the utter destitution in which she will be plunged when the relief given to her by the Literary Fund shall cease. I need scarcely say that I shall be happy to add my name to the list of petitioners. . . ."

" I have received the draft petition. I do not think it could be improved. I shall forward it without delay to Mr. Frederic Chapman, with a request that he will augment the list of poor Sir Lascelles Wraxall's works if he can. This done, the Petition shall be submitted, as you suggest, to Mr. Anthony Trollope. . . . Pray let me thank you personally for the trouble you have taken in the matter. You have done a very kind act. . . ."

Ainsworth's next work, *The Constable de Bourbon*, appeared in *Bentley's* from November, 1865, to August, 1866, when it was published by Chapman and Hall in three volumes.[1] It was " Inscribed to the Memory of

[1] The one volume edition, issued by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

my old and dear friend, Dudley Costello, at whose suggestion the Romance was written." This spirited narrative which, with its hair-breadth escapes and profuseness of costume detail, somewhat resembles *Crichton*, deals with the flamboyant career of Charles de Bourbon, Constable of France, who, in 1523, ambitiously plotting to create a kingdom for himself, joined the Emperor Charles V and Henry VIII in the campaign against his near kinsman, François I of France. The book gives excellent descriptions of the Siege of Marseilles, the Battle of Pavia (where François I was captured), and, finally, of the memorable Sack of Rome, in 1527, where the heroic, if traitor, Bourbon met his death. Diane de Poitiers, the Chevalier Bayard, Admiral Bonnivet, and many other historical personages, figure in this romance.

It was succeeded by a novel of quite a different type, entitled *Old Court*, which, after the customary preliminary run in *Bentley's*, was published by Chapman and Hall, in three volumes, in 1867.[1] This was a story of the day, the subject being the well-worn one of two brothers in love with the same woman. One brother is dramatically murdered by the other, who eventually meets with a tragic end also; and the plot is concerned with the remorseful vow of the murderer to bequeath the Old Court property to the son of his brother, to the exclusion of his own daughter. The principal scenes of the book are laid in Kent, some twelve miles from Aylesford, but the action also passes to Brighton, Redhill, Reigate, and Tunbridge Wells.

To Tunbridge Wells Ainsworth himself removed in the

[1] The one volume edition, published by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

summer of 1867, and his departure from Brighton marks the close of his social and dinner-giving career. He must have regretted the change—prompted, no doubt, by decreasing income—for he had lived in Brighton for fourteen years and had known it well for over forty. But the place had altered, and not for the better, since the far-away time of his first visits. Mrs. Houstoun records [1] that Ainsworth "loved to talk of the so-called 'Queen of Watering-places,' as she had been some forty or fifty years previously, before her dimensions had assumed their present gigantic proportions. . . . 'Ah!' the septuagenarian author would say, 'those were truly days of sunshine, and well do I remember them. On the cliffs, even in mid-winter, it was always warm—always bright and cheerful—and then the company! There was no railroad in the days I speak of. . . .' These words spoken more than half sadly."

His new home, No. 1, St. James's Villas (now known as "Chesterton," No. 27), St. James's Road, though pleasantly situated in the Calverley district of Tunbridge Wells, was small; Ainsworth seems to have led a very quiet life in the charming Kentish town, and to have had but few friends there. Indeed, almost the only reminiscence of his residence appears to be an amusing one related by his house agent, to the effect that the room used by Ainsworth as his library was so full of books that the floor bulged from their weight, with the result that the ceiling below came down!

Although no longer a leading novelist and prominent figure in society, and now but seldom seen in public Ainsworth rested not from literary labours, for, as he

[1] *A Woman's Memories of World-known Men.*

wrote to Crossley: "I am still, as ever, hard at work. I have had no holiday this year. . . . I fear I shall not be able to run down to Manchester this autumn, as I have a book to finish before Christmas."

This new work, *Myddleton Pomfret*, published in three volumes by Chapman and Hall, in 1868,[1] was a modern story, dealing with a presumed drowning mystery in Lake Windermere. The supposed suicide had, however, adopted this ruse to avoid financial difficulties; but on his resuscitation, found his "widow" married to another man. Various scenes in the tale take place in France and Switzerland, in Surrey, and near Bury, in Lancashire, where some rather amusing relief is afforded by the intrigues and quarrels of a wealthy, middle-class family.

Myddleton Pomfret was originally issued in *Bentley's* (July, 1867, to March, 1868), and was destined to be the last of Ainsworth's stories therein: it was certainly very different to his first—*Jack Sheppard*—which had brought fame and fortune to *The Miscellany* nearly thirty years earlier. But now the celebrated old periodical was moribund. Ainsworth being unable to continue his original high scale of remuneration, the superior contributors of yore went elsewhere, and consequently the sales fell off. So Ainsworth was perhaps not sorry to dispose of *The Miscellany* to its original founder for £250 —although this represented a loss of £1450 on the purchase price given fourteen years before, in 1854. Since 1861 *The Miscellany* had been published by Chapman and Hall, but after Bentley reacquired possession, the last six numbers were issued from the original house in

[1] The one volume edition, issued by Routledge in 1881, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

New Burlington Street. *Bentley's Miscellany* ceased to exist at the close of 1868, when it was incorporated with the rising star of *Temple Bar*. Such was the passing of the periodical so intimately associated with some of the most famous work of Dickens, Barham, and Ainsworth.

As soon as he had sold *Bentley's*, Ainsworth allied himself with a new weekly periodical, *Bow Bells* (issued by John Dicks, 313, Strand), in which many of his later —and now almost forgotten—stories appeared. The first, in 1868, was *The South Sea Bubble*, a tale of the year 1720, dealing, of course, with the extraordinary financial scheme of the company formed for trading in the South Sea to buy up the National Debts, Annuities, etc., and amalgamate them in one fund, which scheme, after enriching thousands beyond the dreams of avarice, suddenly burst, bringing ruin and panic in its train. This second financial novel of Ainsworth's was, in fact, the English sequel to *John Law*. But with the history of the South Sea scheme Ainsworth combined a plot which, if somewhat conventionally melodramatic, had an echo of the dashing romances of his earlier time, wherein murders, masked marauders, midnight affrays, and stolen wills and heiresses, form the chief ingredients. Ainsworth introduced the Duke of Wharton, of Mohock notoriety, George I, the Duchess of Kendal, and other characters of the time, into the story; and many of the incidents take place at the picturesque Tabard Inn, Southwark, which was finally demolished in 1874, despite its Chaucerian traditions. The only book edition of *The South Sea Bubble* was that issued by Dicks in paper covers, at sixpence, which contained nineteen of E. H. Corbould's illustrations, reproduced from *Bow Bells*.

In his next story, *Hilary St. Ives*, Ainsworth again essayed to depict contemporary life; but he was never at home with this description of novel. His peculiarities of style and construction—rather formal dialogue, turgid love-passages, obvious disguises, supernatural mysteries, and so forth—were entirely suitable to a romantic, historical subject, but, of necessity, not nearly so successful when adapted to a so-called society tale. Ainsworth required a groundwork of historic fact on and around which to weave his picturesque fancies: an original, brilliant plot was somewhat beyond his province. Still, of his modern stories, *Hilary St. Ives*, the scene of which is laid in the Guildford district of Surrey, is, perhaps, the best. Its plot is concerned with the mystery surrounding the origin of the hero; and a robbery, by footpads, on a lonely heath is the prelude to many other sensational occurrences and imbroglios. *Hilary St. Ives* appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine* during 1869, and was published, soon after, by Chapman and Hall in three volumes.[1] Writing to Crossley, in October, the author said:—

"I am just putting the finishing touches to a story on which I have been engaged for the last nine months. Whether I shall write another, Heaven knows. . . . It was a great misfortune to me that Disraeli went out: he would have given me something better than the pension.

"I am rejoiced to learn that you have got into a new and more comfortable abode, though how you have made up your mind to leave Booth Street I cannot conceive—still less, how you could remove your mass of books.

[1] The one volume edition, issued by Routledge in 1881, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

The effort seems superhuman. I must run down to Manchester one of these days to look at you. We shall not have many more meetings if we do not take care. You seem to be flourishing like an oak, and to set time at defiance, but I find myself growing older. Like my worthy friend Hatton, I am obliged to be careful. I never drink port—and for an excellent reason—there is none to be got worth drinking . . . but tell the hospitable Hatton that I hope to taste the ' Rex ' or kingly port once more." [1]

At this date was issued *The Manchester School Register* —giving biographical details of the old pupils—and in connection with this publication Ainsworth wrote to Crossley in November–December, 1869 :—

" I am pleased that you have introduced the extracts from *Mervyn Clitheroe,* as I think the sketches give a tolerably good idea of Dr. Smith and Dr. Elsdale. I have added a footnote, which you can adopt if you think

[1] The vinous amenities of Mr. Hatton's hospitable house, Hatton, in Cheshire, included a famous waterfall—or rather winefall, which Crossley hymned as follows :—

" When we meet with a traveller fresh from his journey
Through Europe in search of its classical views,
He tells us long tales of the beauties of Terni,
Of Tivoli's falls and the fount of Vaucluse ;
But tell me the fountain whose banks you have sat on,
Of the falls, though made famous by Horace's strain,
Which can boast, like the wonderful waterfall Hatton,
An exhaustless supply of Moselle and Champagne ?

Then long may that waterfall, sparkling and gleaming,
Exult as it sees the deposit below ;
And long may the fires of the mansion, bright beaming,
To welcome our coming still cheerfully glow !
With the best of all hosts, and with Port beyond cavil,
Be it ' Twenty ' or ' Forty '—I care not for more—
Let others to seek finer waterfalls travel,
If they'll give me but Hatton, I'll leave them Lodore."

proper, relative to Captain Elsdale, who was a very remarkable man. As I have mentioned, the early portions, and by *much the best*, of *The Privateersman* are simply his autobiography, without any alteration.[1] I also think Dr. Elsdale's characteristic inscription ought to be preserved—it is so like a pedagogue. . . . The 3rd volume of *The School Register* will be very interesting to me. I will write to Ford North to send some account of himself. . . . He is a clever fellow, and has written a novel on the subject of Pedro the Cruel. He passed many years in Spain, and married a Spanish lady. At some point or other, you ought to insert the sketch of John Leigh from *Mervyn Clitheroe*. He belongs to our epoch, and the sketch is good.

"I should be glad to see proofs as you come to my time, and will add whatever occurs to me. You must cram in as many anecdotic notes as you can. It is a pity that Mr. Smith [2] did not give some anecdotes of his father. Perhaps some old pupils may supply them. The sketch is too bald and dry. . . . You will see that Mr. Smith has been writing to me for a memoir of poor Gilbert. It is very difficult to write, as I do not wish to enter into details. . . ."

Ainsworth eventually wrote the memoir of his unfortunate brother for *The School Register*, and when sending it to Crossley, some time later, said :—

"In consequence of another application from Mr. Finch Smith . . . I have written the accompanying sketch of poor Gilbert. I have done the best I could. Luckily I found some notes, written in pencil, of our trip to the Rhine in 1828, and these, as you will see, I have

[1] See *ante*, p. 120.

[2] Son of the former High Master of the Manchester Grammar School.

introduced.[1] I have also introduced Gilbert's *Vale*.[2] . . . I am glad to find something that will give a slight idea of him. . . . You might add a few lines, in confirmation of my statement, of your opinion as to his abilities. It ought to be known that Gilbert was named after Gilbert Winter. . . .

"I have read all your notes and remarks scattered through the second volume, and have been much amused by them."

"*November 23rd*, 1869.

"In case you should not possess it, I send you Laman Blanchard's Memoir of myself, to which I have appended a list of my works. The list is now so long that I had forgotten several of them. Since 1860, it appears I have written about 30 volumes of the ordinary novel size—several on subjects requiring some research.

"I am about to migrate from Tunbridge Wells to Hurstpierpoint, in Sussex (nine miles from Brighton), where I have taken a nice little house. It is at the foot of the South Downs. I take possession at Christmas. Talking of Christmas, let me hope that the season may be festive with you. Drink as much old port as you can, while there is yet time, and rejoice as of old. . . ."

So, at the close of 1869, Ainsworth left Tunbridge Wells, after residing there only two years, and returned once more to Sussex and his much-loved Downs.

During the last few years of his life, which we are now approaching, Ainsworth retired more and more from the world; and, with one important exception, there is little of note to relate beyond the history of the stories he continued to produce annually—and often to the extent of two in a year.

His new house, "Little Rockley," at Hurstpierpoint,

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 177. [2] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 18.

though small, was very charmingly situated, overlooking open, well-wooded country, and sheltered by the South Downs. Here he resided with his two unmarried daughters; but he also passed much of his time at Hill View Lodge, Reigate, a house he had taken for his brother, Gilbert Ainsworth, who, as before related, suffered from mental trouble.

At Hurstpierpoint, Ainsworth mixed a little in local society, and was always glad to see any old friend who would come over from Brighton or down from town to dine with him quietly. Apart from these small distractions, he led a very solitary life—in complete and remarkable contrast to the social whirl of the bygone years and the unlimited hospitality of Kensal Manor House. The former brilliant conversationalist now avoided people, and in his lonely walks, accompanied only by one or more of his favourite King Charles spaniels, he greatly disliked being joined by any acquaintance, and, if possible, would meet no one when walking in the country. The extent to which Ainsworth had lost sight of his old circle of intimates is illustrated by a story told by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald :—

" I recall a dinner at Teddington, in the sixties, given by Frederic Chapman, the publisher, at which were Forster and Browning. The latter said humorously, ' a sad, forlorn-looking being stopped me to-day, and reminded me of old times. He presently resolved himself into—whom do you think ?—Harrison Ainsworth ! ' ' Good Heavens ! ' cried Forster, ' is he still alive ? ' "

Still alive and destined, by sad chance, to outlive both Forster and Browning and many another once close friend.

"LITTLE ROCKLEY," HURSTPIERPOINT.
AINSWORTH'S HOME, 1869-78.
Photographed by Miss Mary Arthur.

Though the old ties were loosened, Ainsworth did not forget former days of friendship. Writing to Charles Kent, on 7th July, 1870, he said :—

" I was greatly shocked by the sudden death of poor Dickens. I have not seen him of late years, but I always hoped that we might meet again, as of old. His last letter seems to have been written to you. I cannot understand why his pictures are to be sold."

If the novelist was thus no longer gregarious, he still preserved his temperamental taste for the natural world and supernatural things ; for an ancient inhabitant of Hurstpierpoint with whom Ainsworth sometimes conversed, relates that the author was " very interested in anything connected with nature, and elves and ghosts, and, when out walking, he would often jot down on paper some notes connected with these subjects." Ainsworth's daily programme was an early morning walk at seven o'clock ; then work at his desk all day ; another stroll in the late afternoon before dinner, and then work again in the evening. He was particularly fond of rambling about in Danny Park—the charming surroundings of the fine old Tudor mansion of his friends and near neighbours, the Campions.

His literary output was as voluminous as ever ; writing to Crossley on 30th November, 1870, he said : " I am very busy just now. . . . I hope to complete another story before Christmas, and then I shall be free for a few months. We must meet soon—at the latest in the spring. I am astounded to hear of the 71st birthday : how time flies ! Have you seen Murray's Handbook to Salop, Cheshire, and Lancashire ? I was pleased to find myself included among the celebrities of the county."

Ainsworth's new story, *Talbot Harland*, "A Tale of the Days of Charles the Second," appeared in *Bow Bells* during 1870, and the only book edition of it was that in paper covers, at sixpence, published by John Dicks, with ten illustrations by Frederick Gilbert. It is consequently one of the least known of its author's works.

The period, 1670–1, of *Talbot Harland* was an admirable one for an historical romance, and if Ainsworth had but essayed it thirty years earlier, in the days of his literary prime, he would undoubtedly have produced a very fine book. But even his overworked pen of 1870 was able to make effective play with the varied romantic and dramatic incidents which characterized the middle portion of the Merry Monarch's reign, when the Court was alternately at Tunbridge Wells, Whitehall, Newmarket, and Windsor; when the Portsmouth was the ruling favourite; when Blood made his audacious attempts to murder the Duke of Ormond and to carry off the Crown Jewels. Ainsworth had an ingenious suggestion for solving the enigma of why the King pardoned Blood and bestowed a pension upon him: he imagined —it may be correctly—that Blood was the chief agent in a secret society formed to destroy the King's life, but that, on the opportunity arising, when the desperado surprised Charles asleep and might easily have killed him, he relented; the King, in gratitude, promised to aid Blood should occasion ever arise, and fulfilment of the royal pledge was claimed after the treasonable robbery in the Tower of London. Doubtless the King found Blood a useful secret agent to take into his own service —much in the manner that the Russian police of to-day employ revolutionaries as spies. In *Talbot Harland*, also,

in addition to Charles II and his court, Ainsworth introduced Claude Duval, embellishing him with a dual personality in the shape of the Count de Bellegarde, who came to England in the suite of the Duchess D'Orleans : this portrait of the highwayman, however, is very inferior to that of his confrères—the outlaws who figure so bravely in *Rookwood*.

With the close of 1870 Ainsworth ceased to be proprietor and editor of *The New Monthly Magazine*, which he had held for over twenty-five years. The most interesting contributions he secured for his final volumes were some papers, by Cyrus Redding, defending Byron and the poet's half-sister, Mrs. Leigh, from the gross charges formulated by Mrs. Beecher Stowe. After Ainsworth's resignation of the last of his magazine properties—with all its attendant cares and advantages—the editorship of *The New Monthly* passed to his cousin, W. Francis Ainsworth, who until then had acted as second in command. But the former chief still continued to take an active interest in the periodical ; he read contributions sent to him, and, whenever possible, recommended them favourably to the editor.[1]

[1] In its latter days *The New Monthly* was not able to pay all contributors. Writing to Miss Jennett Humphreys in January, 1874, W. Francis Ainsworth said :—

" The poor old Magazine is not yet quite dead, but it is published under different circumstances, which if not remunerative, are at least not so onerous to me. The publisher undertakes now to bring out the Mag. at 2s. 6d. at his own risk, and I do the editing at mine ; and we are to divide *profits* when they come ! I have it no longer in my power to send out presentation copies as I used to do. . . . I am so afflicted with deafness that a long conversation is distressing to me—nor can I hear a sermon in church. I am indeed only fit for the desk. For seven long years that I was in the East I almost always slept in the open air, and consequently every autumn had from 2 to 3 months of ague, which finally nearly deprived me of my hearing. . . . My cousin

Among the later contributors to *The New Monthly*, Harrison Ainsworth was particularly interested in Miss Jennett Humphreys;[1] and some extracts from his numerous letters to this lady will demonstrate again the kindliness and courtesy of his nature, and the encouragement he always gave to young writers of promise in their efforts to establish a position in the world of letters.

Writing from Hill View Lodge, Reigate, on 2nd December, 1869, he said :—

"Mr. Harrison Ainsworth presents his best compliments to Miss Jennett Humphreys. He cannot refrain from expressing the great pleasure he has received from a perusal of her charming paper. Some of the sketches—especially the female portraits—are admirable. Lady Hamilton and Perdita . . . are deliciously described, and the pictures are perfect of the proud Duchess of Argyle, the Countess of Cork, Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Garrick, and Mrs. Opie. . . ."

And the next day he continued :—

"I have not said one word more in praise of your article than it deserves. It has delighted me. You say the right thing of everybody. I feel it would be unfair to divide it, and I won't do so, whoever else may suffer. *South Kensington*, 1868, shall be the title. . . .

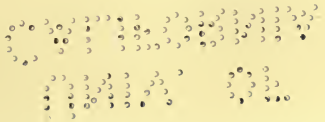
is quite well and writing as hard as ever. He is now producing a new story in *Bow Bells*, a *penny* publication; those pay best."

It was at one time proposed that a company, entitled The Literary Guild, Limited, with Messrs. W. Francis Ainsworth, G. W. Garrett, and C. F. Adams, as Directors, should take over *The New Monthly Magazine* and establish in its place a new weekly journal to be called *Society*. The prospectus of the company stated that the "MSS. of shareholders will in all cases have preferential consideration, and, as far as possible, the Editors will restrict their selection to the latter."

The New Monthly Magazine finished its long career in 1884.

[1] Subsequently the author of many articles in *The Dictionary of National Biography* and of books for young people, and an able, voluminous contributor to the magazines.

W. FRANCIS AINSWORTH.



"I am sure that great success awaits you. You read —and know how to turn your reading to excellent account. Moreover, you have a clear, lively, and captivating style. Your success, which is not far off, will be legitimate, and I beg you to accept my congratulations in advance. May the coming year be prosperous!"

"Your ballad is very good—very fantastic and terrible, and 'gars the flesh creep on one's banes.' Your poetry is as good as your prose, and that is saying much. You have caught something of the German spirit. . . .

"I hope you will write to me occasionally, and let me know how you are going on in your struggle for the literary position which I feel certain you will attain. I should be sorry that a correspondence so pleasantly begun, should cease. It is not often that I take so strong an interest in the success of a young writer as I do in your instance."

"*June 8th*, 1870.

"Many thanks for your charming little Child's story. It is the true metal. You have a genius for this sort of thing, and ought to cultivate it—not to the neglect of other work, but as an accessory. . . . Be sure I shall always be delighted to hear from you—always!—but especially when you can report some brilliant achievement."

"LITTLE ROCKLEY, HURSTPIERPOINT,
"*November 24th*, 1871.

"Your letter of the 22nd has followed me here. I have read it with deep interest. The description of your struggles really makes my heart sick. But I believe you will eventually succeed, in spite of all difficulties. Cassell and Co. have a very nice publication for children—*Little Folks*—and I am sure you could write some charming short tales, or short papers, for it, and though the remuneration will probably be slight, your connection

with the little journal in question may be a means of introducing you to the house. In plain truth there are too many Novelists nowadays. Tinsley, Hurst and Blackett, Bentley, and Chapman and Hall are overdone with them. As you find (alas !) they will not look at a MS., you must try to make a name by writing short articles for Magazines, Christmas Annuals, etc. . . . Sometime, or other, when I am in town (if you will allow me) I will do myself the pleasure of calling upon you, and I may possibly be able to offer you some suggestions, based on long, long experience of publishers and editors. Meantime, pray keep up your spirits, and go on courageously. At least, you have one sincere literary friend in

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

"*December 4th*, 1871.

". . . I fancy the gentleman, whom you saw at Chapman and Hall's, must have been Mr. Owen Meredith. I do not know him, but I have heard that he was their Reader. From his name he must be a Welshman. . . ." [1]

"*January 5th*, 1872.

"Yours is by far the nicest, and kindest, and most encouraging letter I have received on the subject of

[1] Ainsworth here curiously confounds the literary pseudonym of the first Earl of Lytton with George Meredith, who was Reader to Chapman and Hall at this period.

Miss Jennett Humphreys gives me the following interesting account of her interview with George Meredith, who had then just published *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* :—

"He was studiously polite to me ; and I have a memory of a man dressed with great care—leading even to lavender-coloured kid gloves —his hair of chestnut colour and lying in curls, or waves, round a handsome face. What he said was patiently said, my faults being pointed out, and his judgment over what I had done being several times repeated—'It will not go to the public.' I asked if I might know to whom I was indebted, and he said, 'excuse me'—which, of course, I was bound to do. We had our talk in a small glass-walled office, enclosed off from the ground floor, at 193, Piccadilly."

Boscobel—and what makes it all the pleasanter to me, this nice, kind letter came quite unexpectedly. . . . I read another charming little article of yours in *Little Folks*. Go on making little folks happy."

"HILL VIEW LODGE, REIGATE,
"*January 6th*, 1877.

"MY DEAR MISS JENNETT HUMPHREYS,

"I am exceedingly obliged by your kind remembrance of me. I assure you I take a very great interest in you—a *real* interest—and am always glad to hear from you. Accept my best thanks for your charming little song. I have no doubt I shall like the music, but the only person who can play it for me here is a little girl of ten years old ; and as yet she has not mastered it—but she will.

"I am glad to find you so full of spirit, and I desire—as I have always done—to give you every encouragement. You cannot fail of success. I have the back numbers of *All the Year Round*, and I will refer to them and read *Learning to Cook*.

"Were I you, I would be gradually going on with a story which would make 3 vols.

"I shall always be delighted to hear from you, I repeat. Sincerely wishing you a happy and prosperous New Year,

"Believe me, always truly yours,
"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

To return to 1871, in this year appeared another of Ainsworth's scarcely known stories, for *Tower Hill*, after its serial issue in *Bow Bells*, has only been published (in England) in paper covers, at sixpence, by John Dicks, and even this edition is out of print now. *Tower Hill* was illustrated by Frederick Gilbert, and

the story, chronologically, comes after *Windsor Castle* and precedes the sequence of works in which the author described the Tower of London, for it deals with 1539. Commencing at Rochester, where Henry VIII sees Anne of Cleves for the first time, and is disgusted, the scene passes to Greenwich Palace. Then, at Lambeth, the King meets the youthful Katherine Howard, and is attracted by her. After scenes in the Tower of London —including the execution of Cromwell—and Hampton Court, where the marriage of Henry and Katherine Howard is described, comes the royal progress to Pontefract. The story traces the Queen's intrigue from childhood with Francis Dereham, but, it is scarcely necessary to point out, the latter was executed, and did not die in the manner recounted by Ainsworth. Compromised also by her relations with Culpepper, *Tower Hill* concludes with the execution of the unfortunate Katherine Howard on the spot which gives the book its title.

Directly this work was completed, the indefatigable author arranged plans and commenced peregrinations preparatory to his next romance, *Boscobel;* writing to Crossley in June, 1871, he said: "I send you the Tauchnitz edition of my latest work, *Tower Hill.* I have been spending a week at Malvern, and on my way back I paid a visit to Charles the Second's place of refuge after the Battle of Worcester—Boscobel. I wish you had been with me."

Before dealing with this work, one or two small details claim attention ere 1871 is past. In September, Ainsworth visited Manchester, and from there went to Cheshire, where, as he told Crossley, "I greatly enjoyed my visit to our worthy friend Hatton of Hatton. Our

host was in good spirits, and gave us some of his best wine, of which we drank enough in all conscience. The party also was very pleasant. I always liked Harry Wood [1]—a very nice fellow indeed, and full of information. His wife, also, is charming. . . . We were a cheery set, and only wanted you to make the party perfect. I hope you are better—everybody says you ought to go to Harrogate, and I am of everybody's opinion. So go, and preserve yourself to us for many a long day and many a quadrilateral dinner. What will become of Jones,[2] and of Raines,[3] and of Harry Wood, if you are altogether laid up? What will become of your old friend W. H. A.?

"Did you notice Bentley's death in the papers—aged 77? I thought he had been older. . . . No doubt you have read *The Battle of Dorking*.[4] In my opinion, it is the best thing since Defoe."

In October, Ainsworth again came to Manchester to attend the dinner at the Grammar School, to which he was specially invited by the trustees. The Earl of Derby presided; and Ainsworth responded to the toast of the Old Pupils, noting in the course of his speech all the distinguished men who had been educated at the school. Writing to Crossley soon after (3rd November, 1871), he said:—

"You will be glad to hear that a full report of the proceedings at the Grammar School Dinner is to be printed

[1] Mr. Hatton's nephew by marriage. Mr. R. H. Wood (1820–1908) married the daughter of Mr. Peter Hatton of Hartford, Cheshire, and he and his wife built and endowed the hospital of St. Cross, Rugby.

[2] Librarian of Chetham College.

[3] Rev. F. R. Raines, Canon of Manchester, and rector of Milnrow.

[4] Written by General Sir George Chesney, K.C.B., M.P., who died 1895.

in the form of a pamphlet. Mr. Walker [1] has sent me a report of my speech by Mr. Palgrave, so that you will have an opportunity of reading it. . . . You are alluded to in the following terms in my speech: 'Amongst the prelates and divines connected with the school, the first I will refer to is John Worthington, who lived in the seventeenth century, and whose very curious Diary has been admirably edited by Mr. Crossley, the President of the Chetham Society, whose absence to-night, owing to ill-health, I most deeply regret.'

"Will it surprise you to learn that a Greek Drama (on the subject of *Medea*) by Mr. J. F. Cornewall Lewis, of Pembroke College, Oxford, is to be inscribed to me? This is rather a feather in my cap."

A compliment, such as that mentioned in the preceding paragraph, always gratified Ainsworth exceedingly. No prominent writer was ever more grateful for appreciation of his literary work, or more keenly sensitive to hostile criticism, than he. Considering the fame and success he had attained, it is curious to relate that even approbation from obscure prints and strangers pleased him as much as it would any unknown and youthful writer reading the notices of his first book. With the exception of the Duke of Wellington, the author of *Jack Sheppard* was, perhaps, the easiest prey the autograph hunter ever ensnared; in fact, he went a willing victim to the slaughter. Letters from admirers of his books always received courteous replies, and Ainsworth often detailed his correspondents' remarks to his personal friends in the most ingenuous manner. Thus, writing to Crossley in November, 1871, he said:—

[1] Mr. F. W. Walker, High Master of Manchester Grammar School 1859–76. Subsequently High Master of St. Paul's School.

" This morning, as I was looking over some old papers, I came upon a letter written to me some four years ago by an American gentleman, Mr. Latrobe. I think it will interest you, but as I do not want to part with the original, I have copied it out for you. I answered it at the time, but I am uncertain whether my letter reached Mr. Latrobe before he returned to Baltimore. I hope so. . . . Read Mr. Latrobe's letter to Jones. The description of the Chetham Library by an American will interest him. It is curious that one of my books should be read in the room which I frequented as a boy.[1] I think you will agree that Mr. Latrobe's is a very good letter as well as very gratifying to me. . . . I am sure he is an extremely amiable, nice fellow."

Ainsworth's unsophisticated pleasure at any tribute to his books or fame is yet another instance of the boyishness which characterized his temperament even to old age. Despite the brilliant success he had won, he never became blasé or cynical, or adopted a superior attitude to lesser men. And, in another direction, he preserved his youthful, happy disposition unsoured and fresh through the fast-advancing years, though he received more than the ordinary share of the buffets of Fate as the End drew nigh.

[1] Mr. Latrobe, who was staying in Manchester, told Ainsworth in his letter that he had been studying *Guy Fawkes* in " the Chetham Library, in the dim alcoves of whose venerable library on this dark day I have been reading the first chapters of your book. I need scarcely say that the *genius loci* did not fail to inspire increased interest in the thrilling narrative. . . . In my visits to Windsor Castle and the Tower of London, your volumes illustrating their history were my companions, and vastly enhanced the pleasure of the visits. The chapters of *The Constable of the Tower*, describing the last days of Henry VIII, I regard as unsurpassed in vigour by any historical writing, and as fully equal to the best passages of Macaulay."

CHAPTER XXIV

SEVEN YEARS: "BOSCOBEL" AND EIGHT OTHER BOOKS.

WE now come to *Boscobel*, which was commenced in December, 1871. The work was mainly written at Hill View Lodge, Reigate (where the author liked to be with his brother), a nice little house, then standing almost in the country,[1] possessing fine views of lofty Reigate Hill and the charming district around.

Ainsworth had for many years intended to write a story based on what a Bishop of Llandaff termed "by far the most romantic piece of English history"—the escapes, wanderings, and hidings of Charles II after the disastrous Battle of Worcester; a series of adventures only rivalled by those of the King's gallant grand-nephew and namesake in Scotland nearly a century later. Various reasons caused the postponement of the author's plan, but, at length, stimulated by some graphic views of the places connected with the royal peregrinations, which were issued by Mr. Frederick Manning, he set to work. *Boscobel* first appeared serially in *The New Monthly Magazine* throughout 1872, and its progress is frequently mentioned by the author in his letters to Crossley:—

"*December 21st*, 1871.

"I have ordered an early copy of the magazine to be sent to you. You will find that I am on the eve of

[1] The locality is now called Glovers Road.

HILL VIEW LODGE, REIGATE. OCCUPIED BY AINSWORTH, 1869-81.
From a photograph kindly sent by Mr. K. Reeve.

the Battle of Worcester. I have to introduce Old Noll, and I am rather afraid of him."

"*January 25th*, 1872.

"I hope to make something out of the Worcester Fight. Next month comes the tug of war. How do you like Forster's *Life of Dickens*? I have only dipped into the book, but I see he only tells half the story."

"*March 27th.*

"I am very glad to find that you like the 'Battle of Worcester.' It has given me some trouble, but I have had a good deal of local assistance from Mr. Woof of Worcester, who has furnished me with plans, etc. . . .

"Mr. W. Harrison of Samlesbury Hall, near Preston, has just sent me a magnificent volume—*The History of the Ancient Hall of Samlesbury*, by James Croston. . . . Mr. Harrison has also invited me to spend a few days with him at Samlesbury, which I intend doing in the course of the summer."

"*April 23rd*, 1872.

"I hope you will like the forthcoming No. of *Boscobel*. I have brought Charles to the gate of the old house. To-morrow, I go to Wolverhampton to see Mr. Parke, a bookseller of that town, and an excellent man, who has furnished me with a great deal of material relative to Worcester and Boscobel. On Thursday, I am going with him to Boscobel and Moseley, and wish you could be of the party." [1]

"*June 24th*, 1872.

"As I find I cannot possibly get away just now, I have been obliged to write to Mr. W. Harrison, of Samlesbury Hall, to postpone my visit to him. . . . I must

[1] Mr. Parke also accompanied Ainsworth and the Hon. Charles Wrottesley on a visit to Chillington House, Staffordshire, the ancient seat of the Giffards, on whose estate the hunting-lodge of Boscobel is situated.

finish *Boscobel* by the middle of September, as the tale will be published in a complete form early in October, and I have quite as much to do as I can well manage. . . . It promises to be popular."

Boscobel ; or The Royal Oak was duly published at the date mentioned by the Tinsleys, of 18, Catherine Street, Strand, in three volumes, with the same illustrations, engraved by J. H. Rimbault from drawings by F. Manning, P. Justyne, and Captain J. H. L. Archer, as had appeared in the magazine ; but some of the woodcuts were not reproduced. The work was inscribed to the memory of the author's old friend, and staunch ally in the pugnacious days of *Ainsworth's Magazine* and the Conflict with "Father Prout" thirty years agone—John Hughes, of Donnington Priory, Berks, the editor of *The Boscobel Tracts*, which were, in fact, the original cause of Ainsworth's resolve to write a romance on the same subject.

The second edition of *Boscobel* followed two years later (1874), and the third appeared in 1875. Many other editions have been issued at subsequent dates, for the book has always been popular, and it is consequently included in the uniform sets of the author's most famous works. And deservedly so. *Boscobel* is by far the best of Ainsworth's later romances, and very superior to the mediocre stories he produced just before it and in the years following : it displays much of the method which brought him his worthily won fame in the earlier years—that saturation of the writer with his period and authorities, that personal examination of places and localities to be described, that careful attention to every detail however small.

After a full account of the Battle of Worcester and the capture of the city by Cromwell, Ainsworth describes in detail the King's flight to White Ladies in Brewood Forest, and thence to Madeley Court and Boscobel, and the historic adventure of the royal fugitive in the oak tree.[1] Then comes the account of the King's stay at Moseley Old Hall [2] and Bentley House,[3] in Staffordshire, and how Charles rode, disguised as a groom, with his faithful guide, Jane Lane, from thence to Bristol and Trent. After narrating the abortive attempt to escape from Lyme Regis, the book concludes with the King's arrival at Heale House and Salisbury Plain; for the monarch's subsequent movements and adventures, before sailing from Shoreham, Ainsworth had already described in *Ovingdean Grange*.

In *Boscobel*, Ainsworth drew an effective picture of the five gallant brothers—William, Richard, John, George, and Humphrey Penderel, to whom he paid a well-merited tribute; for the annals of history present no finer instance of loyalty and faithfulness than that exemplified by these humble foresters who guarded and guided the fugitive King through the woods from

[1] Boscobel House remains much the same as when Charles II stayed there, but the present "Royal Oak" is grown from an acorn of the original tree. According to Joseph Taylor, in his *Arbores Mirabiles*, published in 1812, the actual oak which sheltered the king was standing at that date, though "almost cut away in the middle by travellers . . . close by the side, grows a young thriving plant from one of its acorns. The king, after the Restoration, reviewing the place, carried some of the acorns, and set them in St. James's Park, and used to water them himself."

[2] Mr. Allan Fea tells me the interior of Moseley is still intact, but that its picturesque half-timber exterior has been obliterated by a recasing of brick.

[3] Bentley has been entirely rebuilt; only the stables remain of the original place.

White Ladies to Boscobel, and from Boscobel to Moseley. Probably it was the author's high praise of the Penderels, and other Roman Catholic families who aided Charles II, which originated the prevalent belief that Ainsworth was himself a member of the Old Faith: it may be well to state here that such was not the case; he lived and died a member of the Church of England.

Boscobel brought the author into correspondence with lineal descendants of both the Lanes [1] and Penderels. Among the latter was Mr. James Penderel-Brodhurst, who kindly permits me to recount his interesting association with Ainsworth.

At the time when he first wrote to the author of *Boscobel*, Mr. Brodhurst was a precocious boy of fifteen, who, having come to London, from Staffordshire, to seek his literary fortune, was desirous of placing a romantic story he had written in the style of G. P. R. James and Ainsworth. So he naturally addressed himself to the last-named, and received the following reply :—

"HILL VIEW LODGE,
"REIGATE,
"*January 27th*, 1875.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I am obliged to answer your letter much more briefly than I would desire, but I am very busy.

"I am indeed surprised to find you are a lineal descendant of worthy Humphrey Penderel, the Miller. Decidedly, this circumstance gives me an interest in you. Why don't you assume the name of Penderel if you are entitled to it? Why not call yourself James Brodhurst Penderel?

[1] A portrait of Jane Lane was presented by her family to Ainsworth.

"I am extremely busy at this moment, and cannot undertake to read your MS. and advise upon it till I have got rid of my own engagements, and I do not think I shall be at leisure for three or four months.

"I hope you may find a publisher in the interim; but if not, I will then read the MS. and tell you candidly what I think of it, and your chances of success.

"With best wishes,

"Very truly yours,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

More fortunate than most literary aspirants, Mr. Penderel-Brodhurst soon found acceptance of his romance, for *Destined to Win Her* appeared in *Bow Bells* the same year, and Ainsworth wrote to the youthful author: "I am very glad indeed to learn that Mr. Dicks has accepted your Tale, and sincerely trust it will be successful. You have now made a start." And later he said: "I have read your story, and think it very successful as a first effort."

In the numerous letters which Ainsworth addressed to his young correspondent he gave him much useful advice—although some of it, it must be confessed, was contrary to what he had practised in his own case. Thus he wrote in June, 1875: "I do not advise you to enter upon a literary career. It is a very hazardous profession. You may possibly succeed if you connect yourself with the newspapers.[1] . . . I am certain you will find your old avocation more profitable than literature." The "old avocation" was the law, which Ainsworth apparently forgot he himself twice abandoned in youth

[1] Mr. Penderel-Brodhurst eventually followed this advice, and became assistant editor of *St. James's Gazette*, 1888–93, and subsequently editor of *St. James's Budget* and *The Guardian*.

for literature: Mr. Penderel-Brodhurst followed the example instead of the advice, for after resuming the law for a time, he soon returned to literary efforts, in which Ainsworth, notwithstanding his pessimistic warnings, continued to take a kindly interest. In 1876, the author of *Boscobel* wrote at different times :—

" I am pleased to hear that you are preparing a *Guide to Boscobel and White Ladies*, and I really think it will be successful. . . . You are quite welcome to extract any passages from my Tale.

" Cuthbert Bede is the Rev. Edward Bradley, Rector of Stretton, Oakham, and I feel assured will give you permission to reprint his narrative of Charles's Route after the Battle of Worcester. He is a very obliging person.[1]

" You must not forget that Colonel Careless (or Carlos,[2] as he is sometimes styled), Charles's companion at Boscobel, was buried in Brewood churchyard. This will be mentioned in your guide-book.

" If Charles the Second did not give your ancestors a ring, he ought to have done.

" I am glad to learn that the Prince of Wales is likely to visit Boscobel. I wonder whether they have a copy of my story at the House. If not, I will send one.[3]

" I recommend you most strongly to write the life of Mr. Parke.[4] Properly done, it will make a most curious

[1] Edward Bradley, who was born at Kidderminster in 1827, contributed his topographical account of the King's flight to *Notes and Queries*, June, 1868. Of the many books he wrote, the best known is the first, *Verdant Green* (1853), with its humorous description of Oxford life.

[2] Careless changed his name to Carlos at the suggestion and desire of the King : a graceful memento of their adventure in the oak.

[3] Ainsworth duly did so through Mr. Penderel-Brodhurst, who deposited the book in Boscobel House.

[4] William Parke, of the Deanery, Wolverhampton, a retired bookseller and a very remarkable man. Mr. Parke, who died in 1876.

piece of biography, and must have a great success. I have no doubt if you set to work at once you can obtain ample materials, for I believe his correspondence was most extensive. But you ought to give his full history, and trace him on—step by step. A picture of his latter life—say, for the last ten years—with an account of his numerous friends and visitors would be most interesting. He was really the most hospitable man, in his way, I ever knew, and the constant succession of his guests was quite surprising. . . . The biographical sketch which appeared in *The Wolverhampton Chronicle* does not even allude to the number of important county people who used constantly to stay with him at the Deanery—the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord Lewisham, Lord Wrottesley, and many others. Dr. Lonsdale, the late Bishop of Lichfield, was quite as much attached to him as the present bishop. . . . My old schoolmaster, Dr. Jeremiah Smith (High Master of the Manchester School) was born at Brewood, and buried in the family vault at Brewood. He was an intimate friend of Mr. Parke.

"If you decide upon acting on my suggestion you should lose no time in occupying the ground. But let me correct one error into which you have fallen. No two persons were ever more unlike than worthy Mr. Parke and Mr. John Forster. The latter was *not* the friend of men of letters, unless they could serve him."

Mr. Penderel-Brodhurst, as advised, wrote a memoir of Mr. Parke, which pleased Ainsworth, who pronounced it "very well done." This kindly encouragement of a young and then unknown writer, in whose literary career he continued to be interested, presents Ainsworth

aged 79, had rendered Ainsworth considerable service in the composition of *Boscobel* by means of many rare tracts, prints, and books.

in a very pleasant light. But, indeed, he was always sympathetic and kind with young people. An instance, which happened about this same time, has been related to me by Miss Arabella Kenealy, the distinguished novelist. On one occasion, Miss Kenealy, when quite a young girl, was travelling on the railway near Brighton. Two gentlemen got into her carriage, and their talk concerned books, various works by Ainsworth being mentioned. Miss Kenealy, remembering certain criticisms she had heard on *Jack Sheppard*, felt constrained to join in the conversation, and remarked that *she* thought Ainsworth's books were of an injurious tendency and likely to have a bad influence on the young. Whereupon, "one of the gentlemen"—to continue in Miss Kenealy's own words—"smiled in a kind and amused fashion upon the young and eager person with ideas who ventured to express opinions upon so large a question. He said it was pleasing to meet one so young who had also intelligent views on something more than the mere story in a book, although the verdict was not favourable as to the tendency of certain works. He did not tell me who he was. It was his friend who—greatly to my horror—intimated his identity." It was indeed the author of *Jack Sheppard* himself with whom Miss Kenealy had been conversing; but he bore his young critic no malice, talked much to her, and saw her into another train later in the journey. Miss Kenealy adds, "On reaching home, I at once sought out Mr. Ainsworth's portrait and recognized it. He had, I think, too much kind tact to have revealed himself after I had committed myself to those opinions concerning his books." Ainsworth never knew that the heroine of this amusing adventure was the

daughter of his old friend and magazine coadjutor of thirty years before—Dr. E. V. Kenealy.

Returning to Ainsworth's correspondence with Crossley, he writes to the latter in July, 1872 :—

"Routledge is about to publish a new edition of my *Ballads*, and is to include in it *The Combat of the Thirty*. I showed him the Memoir of myself, which you have so kindly contributed to *The Manchester School Register*, and he is very anxious to append it to the new edition of the *Ballads*.[1] . . . The volume is very nicely got up, but I wish *The Combat of the Thirty* had been illustrated."

"All Souls' College, Oxford,
"*August 26th*, 1872.

"I have been spending a couple of days in a most jolly manner with the Hon. Charles Wrottesley,[2] a Fellow of this College, and I sincerely wish you had made one of the party. It would have suited you in every respect. We have had a fine haunch of venison each day for dinner —hock, champagne, claret, and old port. All day rambling through the old Colleges, or boating on the river, or looking over the Libraries. To-day I am off to Bridport and Lyme Regis to visit the localities of Charles's wanderings."

"Hill View Lodge, Reigate,
"*November 4th*, 1872.

"I am already casting about for a subject for a new story, and shall be very glad of a suggestion from you. I have an idea of opening the tale with a picture of Manchester in 1745, during the stay of Prince Charles. Doctor Byrom and a good many other personages might be

[1] This plan was carried out.

[2] Second son of the second Baron Wrottesley. Mr. Charles Wrottesley was a well-known sportsman, and died in 1907, at the age of eighty-one, at Codsall, Staffs.

introduced, with Colonel Townley, the Deacons, Jemmy Dawson, Syddall, and the Jacobite clergy. I think the period is better than 1715. Written in a quiet sort of style, I think a sketch of Manchester in 1745, with the society of the period, would be interesting."

Ainsworth followed out the plan he had sketched for his new book, which occupied his time and careful attention during the next ten months. The historical portion of the tale was based on the Chevalier de Johnstone's *Memoirs of the Rebellion,* Dr. Hibbert-Ware's account of Prince Charles's occupation of Manchester, and, most of all, from particulars given in the journal of Beppy Byrom, a young lady of Manchester, whose family, as before related, were Jacobites, but cautious ones: her father, Dr. Byrom, expressed his political views in the famous lines he wrote:—

> "God bless the King! I mean our Faith's Defender!
> God bless (no harm in blessing) the Pretender!
> But who Pretender is, or who is King—
> God bless us all—that's quite another thing!"

More interesting, however, than these authorities was the author's personal contribution as an historian of this memorable period of Manchester's history; for, as narrated earlier,[1] much of this romance is based on anecdotes related to Ainsworth, when a boy, by old people who had been connected with the Jacobite rising of 1745, that is to say with the incidents which attended it in Lancashire and Cheshire. He states of these ancient chroniclers of his native town, to whom he "listened delightedly in boyhood," that "the stories

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 22.

I then heard made a lasting impression upon me." Further, as Ainsworth pointed out in his Preface, the scenes he described were familiar to him from his earliest years, and he well remembered those picturesque narrow streets of black and white timber houses, with their high gables and lozenge-shaped windows, which had been occupied by Prince Charles and his troops when in Manchester during the stirring days of The '45, and which were still standing in the author's young days. *The Manchester Rebels*, indeed, is in every way intimately associated with Ainsworth's early life; some of its characters—such as the Deacons and Tom Syddall, to say nothing of the Prince himself—had been the favourite heroes of his boyhood; another, James Bayley, who stood hostage for the subsidy levied on the citizens,[1] was his own great-great-grandfather; others, like the Byroms, were ancestors of personal friends; and, finally, the consummation of this story was a sort of realization of his early Jacobite enthusiasm—an expression of that sympathy for the picturesque and unlucky Stuarts which had remained with him from childhood until now, when old age was upon him. The book, then, was the result of somewhat exceptional conditions, interesting both historically and biographically, and as Ainsworth very truly said, when writing to thank Crossley for his favourable comments on *The Manchester Rebels*, "No one, I think, could have written it but myself, and though I am not altogether satisfied with what I have done, I believe that the tale will become popular in Manchester."

The belief has been verified. *The Manchester Rebels* is

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 16.

one of its author's most popular works, judging from library statistics, in the city of his birth, where, naturally, he is very highly regarded and extensively read. As Mr. Edmund Mercer has correctly and succinctly observed of this book: "We doubt whether Ainsworth ever told a tale more interesting to a Manchester born reader. . . . As a plot it is as smooth and straightforward as the alphabet; as history its main incidents are true; as a description of Manchester and Manchester life at the time it is the more realistic as the scenery is, so to say, allowed to draw itself, and the characters were all real men and women with well-known figures, traits, and dispositions. Ainsworth's style is here at its lightest, and its very simplicity adds so much to the verisimilitude of the dialogue that he might have seen and heard all he relates, might have been an actual participator in the events that happen. Perhaps the secret of this is that he was born in the town and personally knew every street in it, and . . . that he often heard (from lips repeating what eyes had seen and ears had heard) the doings in Manchester at first hand." [1]

This book, then, is an excellent picture of Manchester—both topographical and social—in the middle of the eighteenth century. It contains a detailed description of the town and environs in 1745, and of its occupation by Prince Charles and the raising of the Manchester Regiment in his service. The narrative presents a brief account of the Jacobite march towards London—introducing the true incident of the Prince's interview with Mrs. Skyring, who, as an infant, had witnessed the landing of King Charles II at Dover, eighty-five years

[1] *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 24th December, 1904.

previously,—of the lamentable retreat from Derby, and of the siege and surrender of Carlisle, where the Manchester Regiment had been left to act as garrison. Avoiding the culminating calamity of Culloden, Ainsworth closes his story with a picture of the barbarous executions of the Manchester Jacobites at Kennington Common, including Jemmy Dawson, whose sad fate has also been recorded in Shenstone's ballad. Jemmy Dawson is far more the hero of *The Manchester Rebels* than the titular one, Atherton Legh, who so pusillanimously forswears prince and principles to gain his freedom: Ainsworth, here, certainly adopted unsatisfactory means for securing the proverbial "happy ending" to his story.

"Rawcliffe Hall" is intended for Bewsey House, formerly the seat of the Butlers, an old moated mansion, near Warrington, where, many years earlier, tragic incidents really occurred similar to those described by the author, who utilized them for his plot.

For the copyright of this work Ainsworth received £150 from the Tinsleys, by whom it was published, in September, 1873, in three volumes. It was "Inscribed to the Rt. Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, with every sentiment of respect and admiration." Disraeli, whose acquaintance with Ainsworth dated back forty years to the time when they first met at Lady Blessington's house, wrote, in acknowledgment, a very friendly letter, in which he said he was deeply touched by Ainsworth's action in dedicating the book to him. The original title was *The Good Old Times*, and so it appeared in the first edition; but, unfortunately, both author and publisher had overlooked the fact that Miss Anne Manning had pro-

duced a book with the same name in 1856. Some change, therefore, was necessary in the appellation. In connection with this annoying matter, Ainsworth wrote to Mr. Tinsley :—

"*February 11th*, 1874.

"My dear Sir,

"Generally you are exceedingly slow, but occasionally in a desperate hurry—as now. I don't see that the writer of *Mary Powell* [1] has a prior claim to the title of *The Good Old Times*—on the contrary. But I suppose she has entered it at Stationers' Hall. . . .

"I have been thinking over the matter, and am of opinion that the best title will be *The Manchester Rebels of the Fatal '45*. If I write a Preface I will give the best explanation I can of the change. I have no doubt I shall be able to get all finished early in March : so make yourself easy on that score. As I mentioned to you in a former letter, I can get you some very curious views of old houses in Manchester, if you mean to give illustrations."

A new edition of the book (in one volume), now entitled *The Manchester Rebels of the Fatal '45*, was accordingly issued in 1874, although, unfortunately, it did not contain illustrations of old houses in Manchester, as suggested by Ainsworth in the letter just quoted.[2] In the Preface he mentioned and gave some quotations from a work entitled *Rochdale in 1745 and 1746*, by Mr. Samuel Brierley—a very interesting collection of anecdotes, relating to the visit of Lochiel and a portion of the Highland Army to Rochdale, which had been

[1] Miss Manning's first work, published in 1850.

[2] The edition of 1880, published by Routledge, contained four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert, but these were not architectural.

narrated to the compiler by his great-grandmother, who died in 1806, aged ninety-three, and which, after reading Ainsworth's book, he decided to publish, in 1874. Thus are the centuries linked together; in this case a gentleman, living but thirty years ago, who had conversed with a lady born (in 1713) in the days of Queen Anne.

In 1874, also, Ainsworth produced a new story, entitled *Merry England; or Nobles and Serfs*, which, after a serial appearance in *Bow Bells*,[1] was published, in three volumes, by Tinsley. It is a spirited and picturesque narrative of 1381, when the grievances and extreme taxation of the peasantry, under feudal conditions, resulted in the Insurrection, headed by Wat Tyler and Jack Straw, at Dartford. It recounts how the rebels besieged Canterbury and Eltham Palaces and Rochester Castle; how the Essex contingent assembled on Hampstead Heath under the command of Jack Straw, and how Tyler, with the rest of the rebels, advanced from Blackheath; how the simultaneous attack was thus made on London from north and south; how the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell, Lambeth Palace, and the Savoy, were sacked and burnt; how the Tower was captured; and how, finally, Wat Tyler met his death at the hands of Walworth, after the conference with King Richard II at Smithfield—one of the most dramatic incidents in English history. Chaucer and many other contemporary personages figure as subsidiary characters in *Merry England*, which was

[1] Fifteen of the illustrations, by Frederick Gilbert, which accompanied the tale here, were reproduced in the sixpenny edition of the book, issued by John Dicks.

dedicated to a cousin of the author's in the following letter :—

" To Ralph Fawsett Ainsworth, M.D.

" I now fulfil a promise, long ago made to myself, to dedicate a book to you.

" Accept from me, therefore, this Story of the Conspiracy and Insurrection of the Serfs in 1381—an outbreak as remarkable for the rapidity of its progress, as for its sudden and complete suppression. . . .

" Froissart, Thomas of Walsingham, Henry Knyghton, Grafton, Holinshed, and Stow have furnished the materials of this Tale, which pretends to be little more than a picturesque chronicle. Such as it is, I offer it to you, in remembrance of past days !

" Ere saying adieu, let me congratulate you on your recent floricultural triumph.

" Several years' patience, only to be endured by an enthusiast, have been rewarded by the production of a perfectly new, and exquisitely beautiful hybrid orchid, described as a ' large, lovely white flower of great elegance of form, and with plum-coloured lip,' and which justly merits the name conferred upon it of *Dendrobium Ainsworthii.*

" Compared with this, what is a literary success ?

" Your affectionate cousin,

" W. Harrison Ainsworth.

" Little Rockley, Hurstpierpoint."

Although Ainsworth always gave his literary friends very good advice, he did not always put his dicta into practice himself. For instance, on one occasion he said to Mrs. Houstoun : " Repentance at leisure is very apt to follow . . . on the scribbling mania, for nothing can be more certain than the truth that ' What is done in

a hurry is rarely done well.' The advice which Dryden wrote to poets is equally applicable to novelists—

> " ' Take time for thinking, never work in haste,
> And value not yourself for writing fast.' "

Write fast, and often in haste, the sapient quoter of these lines nevertheless did. And so—not for the first time—a new work followed fast on the footsteps of its predecessor; for *Merry England* was succeeded in *Bow Bells* in the same year, 1874, by *The Goldsmith's Wife*. The latter was reissued, in three volumes, by Tinsley in the following year.[1]

The Goldsmith's Wife is a discreet account of the romantic history of Jane Shore, the fair citizen of London, whose husband, the goldsmith, was so unceremoniously relieved of his marital duties by King Edward IV. Monarchs have always been wont to—

> " Keep about them in scores
> What the Noblesse, in courtesy, term'd their ' Jane Shores,'
> —They were call'd by a much coarser name out of doors,"

as Ingoldsby succinctly puts it; but not one of the frail and brilliant bevy—with the exception of Nell Gwyn—cuts a better figure in history than Jane Shore, for she used her power for the benefit of others—" it was all employed," as Hume says, " in acts of beneficence and humanity. She was still forward to oppose calumny, to protect the oppressed, to relieve the indigent; and her good offices, the genuine dictates of her heart, never waited the solicitation of presents, or the hopes of re-

[1] The sixpenny edition of the tale, published by Dicks, contained twelve of the illustrations, by Frederick Gilbert, which had appeared in *Bow Bells*.

ciprocal services." Ainsworth, in his story, follows her career from the time when, as Jane Milverton, she became the wife of Alban Shore, and he places her capitulation to the King at Windsor Castle. The scene then changes to Dover, with a description of the picturesque ships of the period which carried Edward IV and his army to France for his projected campaign against Louis XI, in 1475. Back in England, the story deals with the last days of Edward IV, and how, after his death, Jane Shore suffered at the hands of Richard III, and did penance, barefooted, at St. Paul's Cathedral. In *The Goldsmith's Wife* Ainsworth returned once more to the scene of his former triumphs—The Tower of London—and again with success, for the period of his latest romance enabled him to depicture the two most dramatic and terrible incidents which occur in the annals of the Tower—the drowning of the Duke of Clarence in a butt of Malmsey wine, and the murder of the two young sons of Edward IV.

To Crossley, Ainsworth wrote at the end of this year, when he had already evolved the scheme of his next story :—

"HURSTPIERPOINT,

"*21st December*, 1874.

"I should like to offer you the good wishes of the approaching season in person, and I should greatly prefer seeing you at dinner on Christmas Day, with a roast turkey and a bottle of good old Rowley Port; but since it is not probable we shall meet, I must take the means of letting you know that you are not forgotten by your old friend. Be certain I will drink your health on Christmas Day in a bumper, coupled with that

of Radolphus.[1] . . . How is our excellent old friend Hatton, and Harry Wood? I fear the former will not be able to assemble his friends as of yore—it pains me to think those meetings are over. . . .

"In *The Manchester Guardian* . . . I saw a note from you in reference to *The Retrospective Review*, which interested me very much. I wish you would jot down a few more such notes and reminiscences. . . .

"By the way, an old Manchester man, who is now an officer in the American Navy (Thomas Gibbons by name) and stationed off Shanghai, inquired about you in a letter I have just received from him. He is writing a sort of history of Manchester at China.

"I have already commenced a new story which I intend to call *The Last Lord Derwentwater*. It will relate, as you will at once comprehend, to the Rebellion of 1715. 'Preston Fight' may be made very effective I think. Lord Derwentwater, Lord Widdrington, General Forster, and Brigadier Mackintosh are well contrasted. Dr. Hibbert-Ware's *Lancashire during the Rebellion of 1715* will furnish me with ample material. Can you suggest a better title for the new story than the one I have selected? Pray remember me most kindly to Canon Raines when you see him. He is a most charming man. I must introduce his wife's ancestor, Beswicke, into the story. . . ."

In March–April, 1875, he continued:—

"By this post I send a copy of the Tauchnitz edition (and I have no other) of my latest novel, *The Goldsmith's Wife*, to the Chetham Library, where you will see it, and I shall be very glad to have your opinion of the story. I have heard nothing of Manchester lately, but I hope you are all getting on to your own satisfaction, which is more than I can say of myself, though I have not

[1] Dr. Ralph Ainsworth.

much reason to complain—but I am rather too hardly worked. . . .

"I am rejoiced to learn from a Notice just sent me that your portrait is to be painted and placed—and it could not be better placed—in the Chetham Library, which you love so well. I have at once written to the Manager of the Manchester Bank to pay in my subscription. I hope a good artist may be chosen who will do you justice." [1]

Ainsworth's new story, which he mentions above, dealing with the last Earl of Derwentwater, was published under the title of *Preston Fight* in May, 1875, in three volumes, by Tinsley, who paid £125 for the work.[2] When writing to the publisher, the author stated, "I have taken great pains with the story, and persuade myself it will be successful"; and in the course of the Dedicatory Letter to his cousin, William Francis Ainsworth, he observed:—

"The details of Preston Fight, given in the Tale . . . may be new to you; inasmuch as you may not have seen Doctor Hibbert-Ware's very curious historical collections relative to the great Jacobite movement of 1715, published several years ago by the Chetham Society, from which my materials have been derived. . . .

"The hero of my Tale is the ill-fated Earl of Derwentwater—by far the most striking figure in the Northumbrian insurrection. The portrait I have given of him I believe to be in the main correct, though coloured for the purposes of the story. Young, handsome, chival-

[1] The portrait was painted by John H. Walker.

[2] The edition in one volume, issued by Routledge in 1879, contained four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

rous, wealthy, Lord Derwentwater was loyal and devoted to him whom he believed his rightful sovereign . . . I commend his story to you."

The romance opens at Lord Derwentwater's ancestral seat, Dilston Hall, Northumberland, and pictures the arrival there on a secret visit, in 1712, of James III. Other scenes take place at Bamborough Castle, and then comes the Rising of 1715 at Braemar and in Northumberland. The progress of this—the most ill-fated of all Stuart undertakings—is traced to the surrender at Preston, whence Derwentwater and his principal companions were taken as prisoners to London. After describing the daring escapes of the Earls of Nithsdale and Wintoun from the Tower and other Jacobites from Newgate, the story concludes with the execution on Tower Hill of the gallant Derwentwater, whose sad, untimely fate has taken such a firm hold of the popular imagination, aided by many a ballad and tale. To this day the Aurora Borealis, which flamed so blood-redly on that night in February, 1716, when the Earl died, is known as " Lord Derwentwater's Lights," and ghostly legends are told of what is seen in Dilston's ruined towers.

Ainsworth in his *Preston Fight* made no allusion to the tradition that Lord Derwentwater's body was temporarily interred, pending its removal to Dilston, in the garden of Derwentwater House, Acton, a property undoubtedly tenanted at that date by the Radcliffe family. The earl's body is said to have been brought to Acton secretly by night, and the site of the grave was marked by a lofty stone obelisk, which was in position

until a few years ago.[1] Here, too, of course, stories were heard of a headless figure which wandered at night.

Directly *Preston Fight* was finished, its indefatigable though septuagenarian author cast about for a new subject for a romance. At first, he said, "I had some idea of taking up the story of Pedro the Cruel. It is very picturesque, but almost too terrible." His choice, however, fell upon the period of the Civil War and the part his native county played in the conflict. Lancashire was ever his favourite locality for a romance, and so the Siege of Manchester gave him opportunity for an admirable description of the old town as it was in 1642.[2] The Storming of Lancaster and Bolton and the Surrender of Warrington are also dealt with, but the book is mainly concerned with the gallant defence by Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby, of Lathom House—hence the title of the story, *The Leaguer of Lathom*. The execution of her husband, James, seventh Earl of Derby—that fine example of a Cavalier—at Bolton, in 1651, concludes the book. Ainsworth's story was mainly based upon certain works issued by the Chetham Society, comprising Seacome's *Memoirs of the House of Stanley, Discourse of the War in Lancashire* (edited by Mr. Beaumont), and *The Memoirs of James,*

[1] It is now in the public park at Acton, being removed when the Derwentwater House estate was converted into building sites. The tradition of the earl's burial here has been very ably described in *Granny's Heroes : a Tale of Old Acton*, by Miss Mary E. Shipley, which also contains a view of the obelisk in its original situation.

[2] Mr. Edmund Mercer points out, in his series of articles on the topography of Ainsworth's Lancashire novels, that the first blood shed in the Great Civil War occurred at Manchester, when Richard Perceval, a linendraper, was killed by a stray bullet in a street affray, on 15th July, 1642. (See *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 26th November, 1904.)

Earl of Derby, by Canon F. R. Raines. He found these productions most useful, and, when writing to Crossley, observed :—

" Mr. Beaumont is really a most excellent writer. His introduction is admirable, and the biographical notes furnish all possible information.

" Canon Raines's *Life of James, Earl of Derby*, is exceedingly good. I am charmed with it. The style is most agreeable. Raines gives me quite an exalted notion of Lord Stanley."

Consequently, on the publication in October, 1876, of *The Leaguer of Lathom*,[1] Ainsworth dedicated the work to Canon Raines, to whom he acknowledged his indebtedness in liberal terms.

After the death of Mr. Jones, the librarian of the Chetham College, Manchester, in 1875, Ainsworth had some desire to take the vacant post. In writing to Crossley, he said :—

" I really think the office would suit me, and I shall give the matter consideration. . . . Who are the present Feoffees of the College ? As you may conceive, I could not allow myself to be proposed as Librarian unless certain of being elected."

But the proposal came to nothing, for a few months later he wrote :—

" I have ceased to think of the Librarianship of the Chetham Hospital. Don't trouble yourself any more

[1] It was issued by Tinsley in three volumes. The one volume edition, published by Routledge in 1880, contains four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

about it. . . . I am so fond of the place that I fancied I should like to live there."

It is much to be regretted he did not return to his native city and spend his last days in the ancient building which he had loved from boyhood, and which was so intimately associated with his earliest expressions of romance. This would indeed have been an appropriate ending to what Laman Blanchard called the youthful " vision splendid."

Another link with the past snapped just at this time, for in April, 1876, his only brother, Gilbert Ainsworth, died at Reigate,[1] and in notifying Crossley he said :—

" I never expected to have this sad news to communicate, for I thought he would have survived me. A week ago he was quite well and walking four or five miles each day. He looks wonderfully handsome as he lies on his death-bed, and his hair has not changed its colour. He would have been seventy on the 4th October next. . . . Death seems to have restored poor dear Gilbert to his former self. I can now think of him as he was at twenty. . . . I am certain if Gilbert had retained his mental powers, he would have been a distinguished writer."

Ainsworth wrote a Memoir of his brother which, with some additions by Crossley, appeared in *The Manchester Courier.*

During 1876 Ainsworth was engaged simultaneously upon two stories, for in addition to *The Leaguer of Lathom* he produced *Chetwynd Calverley*, which, though begun after the former was well on its way, was in point of

[1] He was buried in the family vault at Kensal Green.

date published first. It was issued in June by Tinsley, in three volumes ("In Memoriam: Thomas Gilbert Ainsworth."), and at the same time commenced a serial appearance in *Bow Bells*, where the story was illustrated by Frederick Gilbert.[1] Writing to his publisher, Tinsley, in May, 1876, Ainsworth said :—

"There is a poisoning case in *Chetwynd Calverley* which bears a curious resemblance to the great sensational case [2] now before the public, so that the book will appear very apropos. . . . If you can get an early notice of *Chetwynd Calverley* into some papers, drawing attention to the remarkable resemblance between the poisoning case in that story and 'The Balham Mystery,' you might quote it in your advertisements with effect. . . . A notice just now in *The Daily Telegraph* would sell an edition. I expect to be in town to-morrow, and will call upon you to talk the matter over. I hope you will have a great success."

Chetwynd Calverley deals with the case of a woman who poisons her husband and endeavours to remove her stepdaughter by the same means. The scenes are laid in London and Cheshire. The latter locality enabled Ainsworth to introduce the curious tradition attached to Brereton Mere, that a sunken piece of timber—black and swollen like a corpse long in the water—rises to the surface as a portent of death to a member of the family on whose estate the sombre mere is situated. Such a bizarre tale always, of course, delighted Ains-

[1] Twelve of these plates were reproduced in Dicks's sixpenny edition of the book.

[2] Presumably the mysterious death of Mr. Charles Bravo (formerly Turner), who was poisoned by antimony in wine he had taken at dinner.

worth: but *Chetwynd Calverley* was a poor production, and the Haunted Mere did not play therein its effective part, as it would have done in the brilliant days when *Rookwood* and its Doom-Tree were described by a fresh and then unwearied pen. But the pen—however exhausted—was never allowed to rest. To Crossley he wrote, from Hurstpierpoint, on 27th February, 1877:—

"I am now at work on a tale founded on the overthrow of the Protector Somerset by the Earl of Warwick, and I have introduced Ket's Rebellion in order to describe the old city of Norwich; the rebel camp on Mousehold Heath, and the Oak of Reformation, are picturesque subjects. The book will be published towards Midsummer. I am exceedingly glad to learn that Raines is pleased with the Dedication of *The Leaguer of Lathom*. The book has been published in the Tauchnitz Collection, and I hope soon to send him a copy. You may well be proud of your hundred volumes of the Chetham Society. It is a noble collection. If any good subject for a Tale occurs to you, let me hear of it."

And in July, 1877, he continued:—

"I have directed a copy to be sent to you of *The Fall of Somerset*, and when you have looked into the book, will thank you to hand it over to the Chetham Library. I hope you are in good health and enjoying yourself as usual. For my own part, I live very quietly and avoid large dinners. I wish you could suggest to me a good subject for a story, as I do not mean to lay down the pen."

The Fall of Somerset, which was issued in three volumes by Tinsley,[1] was dedicated by the author "To my dear

[1] About the same time it also appeared, serially, in *Bow Bells*, with fifteen illustrations by Frederick Gilbert, and eleven of these were

granddaughter, Apphia Swanson, July 12th, 1877." The story, after dealing with Ket's Rebellion in Norfolk, traces the career and fall of the Protector, the Duke of Somerset, to his execution on Tower Hill. Thus Ainsworth returned once more to the old fortress which, for nearly forty years, he had so frequently used as the scene for his romances. In historic chronology *The Fall of Somerset* comes immediately after *The Constable of the Tower* and precedes *The Tower of London*. Writing to Crossley on 8th August, 1877, the author said :—

" I am very glad to find you like *The Fall of Somerset*. Ket's Rebellion, I think, makes a good introduction to the story, and old Norwich has not previously been described. I have one or two subjects for a new story, but I have not as yet decided as to which I shall select. The publications of the Chetham Society—*The Jacobite Trials in Manchester in 1694*, edited by Mr. Beaumont, and *Abbott's Journal*, edited by Dr. Alexander Goss—would supply ample material for a good introduction, and Lunt would form a curious character. I could also bring in a striking picture of a galley slave which I have found in the *Memoirs of a Protestant*. . . . Besides this I could give James II at Saint Germain. My other idea is to write a novel treating of Bath in the last century —about 1740—of which Beau Nash should be the principal character. With a view to this story I have been at Bath to renew my acquaintance with the old city,[1] and took up my quarters at the Grand Pump Room Hotel. Strange to say, I could not procure a copy of *Evelina* in the place. York House, the hotel frequented

reproduced in the sixpenny edition of the story, published by John Dicks.

[1] He had spent his honeymoon there fifty-one years earlier.

by Mrs. Thrale and her friends, still exists, but I preferred to be near the hot baths and Abbey. Beau Nash flourished before Miss Burney's time, and died in 1761, before the city had attained its full architectural beauty—but that does not matter. Now which of these subjects would you recommend me to adopt? Give me your notion freely."

Ainsworth carried out both plans, but the Lancashire story was written first—at the instigation of Crossley, to whom he wrote :—

"I shall take your advice. I shall commence with the Jacobite Trials in Manchester (1694), then introduce the assassination and invasion plots, with Sir George Barclay, the Duke of Berwick, and Sir John Fenwick. The arrest, trial, and execution of the latter will form the staple of the story. I shall give William III at Kensington and James II at Saint Germain. If I can manage all this satisfactorily I shall do very well."

And writing from Hurstpierpoint on 9th March, 1878, he continued :—

"I have just finished my new story, *Beatrice Tyldesley*, which will be published in the course of the spring. . . . One of the principal characters is Colonel Tyldesley of Myerscough, and I have given the trial at Manchester at full length. Beatrice is a cousin of Colonel Tyldesley. In the latter part of the story I have given . . . a picture of James II, with his visit to the Monastery of La Trappe. I think the book will be popular—at all events in Lancashire, as it refers to so many of the old county families. . . . Of course, Lunt the Informer figures in the story. . . . I will send a copy for review to Mr. Axon of *The Manchester Guardian*."

Beatrice Tyldesley was duly published, in three volumes, in April, 1878,[1] by Tinsley (who paid £125 for the work), and it was dedicated to Mr. William Beaumont, of Orford Hall, Warrington, in the following generous terms :—

"To you, Sir, the accomplished editor of *The Jacobite Trials at Manchester in 1694*, this tale ought to be inscribed, since the author is largely indebted to you. And in gracing my story with your name, I desire to express my admiration of the manner in which your own task has been performed. No curious historical document was ever more carefully and judiciously edited. By this masterly contribution to the publications of the Chetham Society, you have proved yourself a worthy member of that band of Historical and Literary Fellow-workers, to which once belonged Dr. Hibbert-Ware and Canon Parkinson, and to which I rejoice still belong my friends, the profound antiquarian and unequalled genealogist, Canon Raines, and the learned President of your Society, Mr. Crossley. To rank with such men is no slight distinction. . . .

"Your faithful servant,

"W. Harrison Ainsworth.

"Little Rockley, Hurstpierpoint,

"*April 16th*, 1878."

And on the same day he wrote to his publisher, Mr. Tinsley :—

"I have just dismissed the last sheets of *Beatrice Tyldesley*. I shall want some copies for my private

[1] The story also appeared serially, about the same time, in *Bow Bells*, and fourteen of the illustrations, by Frederick Gilbert, which accompanied it there, were reproduced in the sixpenny edition issued by Dicks.

friends, which I am sure you will kindly let me have, as on former occasions. . . . I beg you will not send a copy to *The Athenæum*, as the work will certainly be attacked in that journal which is always hostile to me." [1]

At this date Ainsworth had some idea of writing a tale about Hurstpierpoint, and introducing his neighbours as the principal characters : but the plan was never carried out. It may be noted here that he was much interested in cycling during its early days, and was a patron of the Sussex Bicycle Association during 1877–8, giving a copy of one of his works as a prize at a local race meeting.

In 1878, also, Ainsworth presented the full-length portrait of himself by Pickersgill [2] to the Chetham Library, Manchester, and writing to Crossley upon this matter he said :—

" I depend upon your getting the portrait placed in a good situation. You are aware that I paid Pickersgill £300 for the portrait. It was painted in 1841. It is still in very good condition. You will be good enough to present it in my name to the Feoffees of the Chetham Hospital. . . ."

" *April 2nd*, 1878.

" I am glad to learn that the portrait is now fixed in the Librarian's Room, and make no doubt that the

[1] Ainsworth's quarrel with *The Athenæum*, it is said, dated from 1845, and arose through the affairs of the Archæological Society. Ainsworth supported Lord Albert Conyngham and Dr. T. J. Pettigrew—the officials who were shed by the Society—in opposition to *The Athenæum*, which advocated the views of the majority of the members.

[2] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 416.

situation suits it very well.[1] . . . I wish the painting to be carefully varnished, and unless the frame can be cleaned and polished up, I should like to have it regilt. There ought, also, I think, to be a *small tablet* placed at the bottom of the frame, with my name in full, and the name of the artist, together with the *date of the portrait.* When this is done, I shall have made my gift complete. And clearly understand that I desire to pay all expenses, and beg you will acquaint me with them."

These charges amounted to £15. Ainsworth, as ever, was generous beyond his means. And at this late stage of his life his income was so reduced that he was compelled to sell the last remnant of his patrimony—Spotland Gate, which had been in the possession of his family since the seventeenth century. Writing to Crossley on this business he said :—

" I have no intention whatever of selling this property unless I get a *very good price* for it ; but a large sum might make the remainder of my life comfortable, and I cannot calculate upon adding to my income much longer by writing novels. . . . If I have to wait for *ten* years more, I shall be pretty nearly at the end of my tether. . . . For the last *ten* years I have worked very hard. . . . I should be exceedingly glad to sell the

[1] Since Ainsworth's death the portrait has been removed from the Chetham Library to the Reference Library in King Street ; and although it hangs here in a good position at the head of the staircase, it is obvious from the terms of the gift that this permanent loan of the picture is not in accord with the donor's intentions. Ainsworth particularly wished his portrait to be in the Chetham Library, as a memorial of his life-long affection for the place and the building's associations with his name and early literary work. See also *ante*, p. 227.

property to Ralph [1] . . . as that would keep the property in the family. . . .

"I have had a very nice letter from Mr. Milne Redhead, of Holden Clough, Bolton-by-Bowland, Clitheroe. The place is quite in my old country and in sight of Pendle Hill.

"You will be pleased, and perhaps surprised, to hear that an entirely new and uniform edition of my works, which will probably make 36 octavo volumes—to sell at three and sixpence each—will very shortly be brought out by Messrs. Routledge. Each volume will contain a novel.[2] . . . I will send the whole series to the Chetham Library."

"*July 22nd*, 1878.

'I paid a flying visit to Manchester on Friday last, and returned by the 12 train on Saturday immediately after executing the conveyance of the Spotland property to Ralph. Most assuredly if I had had time I would have called to have a look at you in all your grandeur at Stocks House.[3] . . . I am sorry we could not discuss a bottle of old port—or better still this hot weather, a bottle of claret—but this is only a pleasure postponed. I have no doubt you will like the Stocks exceedingly—better than any previous residence—and I sincerely hope you may long live to enjoy the place. For me it has many pleasant associations. . . . I am truly glad the old house has come into your hands."

[1] His cousin, Dr. R. F. Ainsworth, who eventually bought the estate for £3000.

[2] This edition, which commenced in June, 1878, comprised thirty-one volumes: it was by no means complete, for nine of Ainsworth's stories were not included, not reckoning *Sir John Chiverton* and *Modern Chivalry*.

[3] Crossley had just purchased and moved into this fine old house, on Cheetham Hill, where he and Ainsworth had so often visited in the years gone by, at the time the place was occupied by their friend, Gilbert Winter.

"*September 3rd*, 1878.

"I send you the introductory sheets of the new edition of *Rookwood*, in which you will find your own excellent and gratifying biographical notice of the author. The first edition consists of 4000 copies, but the work is stereotyped. *The Tower of London* and *Windsor Castle* have already appeared in this edition, and the sale of each has been very great."

"*March 27th*, 1878.

"I send you *The World* of to-day, in which you will find a pen-and-ink sketch that I think will amuse you. It is really very good."

Ainsworth here refers to an "Interview"—a phase of now popular journalism then in its infancy—with himself, conducted and written by Edmund Yates, who gave a lively, picturesque account of his subject,[1] and his description of the personal appearance of the septuagenarian author will form an appropriate conclusion to this chapter:—

"Time has dealt kindly with Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, and laid its finger but lightly on his handsome head. There is no difficulty in recognising in the well-preserved gentleman of more than seventy years the Adonis of the D'Orsay period, whom Maclise loved to paint. In the scanty gray hair, moustache, and imperial there is, it is true, but little to recall the 'fond Parisian aspect,' either of the juvenile dandy limned in 1827, with a profusion of curling love-locks, or the more mature élégant of a few years later; but the well-cut features

[1] Some interesting details furnished by Ainsworth, in the course of his conversation with Mr. Yates, have been introduced in other portions of this work.

remain the same, neither disfigured by fat nor corrugated with wrinkles. . . .

"In his pretty house near Hurstpierpoint, in the midst of the rolling South Downs, he loves to welcome his friends to a literary chat, and a more substantial refection of capons with egg sauce—a dish that may be much commended—washed down with sound claret. He is full of life and spirits, and full of work; and if there be any truth in the well-worn saying that a man is as old as he feels, there are few younger men of mark than William Harrison Ainsworth."

CHAPTER XXV

REMOVAL TO REIGATE. THE MANCHESTER BANQUET. TWO LAST BOOKS. DEATH.

IN the summer of 1878, Ainsworth fixed his residence altogether at Hill View Lodge, Reigate, and returned no more to "Little Rockley," Hurstpierpoint, where his two unmarried daughters continued to live. Concerning these domestic changes, it will suffice to state that they arose from Ainsworth's private marriage (some years earlier) with Miss Sarah Wells,[1] by whom he had a daughter, named Clara, born in 1867. Remarkably susceptible to feminine influence all through his life and always popular with women, Ainsworth was, nevertheless, unfortunate in both his marriages. The second marriage completed his retirement from the social world. He invited no one to his house at Reigate, and if he wished to entertain one of the few old friends he kept in touch with, he did so at his club in London. The brilliant and popular host of Kensal Manor House, the leading entertainer of literary society thirty years earlier, now passed a solitary and—one would imagine—uncongenial existence. Only with the oldest of all his friends, Crossley, did he remain on intimate terms. Their correspondence never languished till the end.

[1] Mrs. Harrison Ainsworth died on 3rd December, 1901, aged 66, at 59, Lansdowne Crescent, Leamington.

So once more it is necessary to repeat the familiar phrase "writing to Crossley, Ainsworth said":—

"*September 14th*, 1878.

"I am extremely sorry to hear of Canon Raines' illness. I have a *very great* regard for him. His death would be a very serious loss, indeed an irreparable loss to the Chetham Society. Has he completed, or put to press, his *Life of Humphrey Chetham*? If any of the sheets have been printed, I shall feel greatly obliged if you will procure them for me. I have always intended to write a tale, of which Humphrey Chetham shall be the chief character, founded upon Canon Raines' Memoir. Don't neglect this I beg of you. I propose to run down to Manchester early in next week, to give Mr. Hinde [1] instructions as to my family arrangement, and hope that you will dine with me quietly at the Queen's Hotel. I shall not dine out anywhere during my brief stay.

"I enclose you a proof of the Dedication to the new edition of *The Lancashire Witches*. I think it will please you."

"*February 21st*, 1879.

"I was very much grieved to find in *The Times* obituary of yesterday there was recorded the death of our excellent friend Hatton. It gave me quite a shock, for I had a very great regard for him. To you, I feel, as well as to Ralph, it will be an irreparable loss. Never again shall we behold that kindly host, or sit at the table with him. No more, no more of that wonderful old Port. I hope most sincerely that you yourself are well. I myself have had a bad cold and what the doctors call a 'relaxed throat,' but am better, almost well. I have written about a volume and a half of a new story, *Beau Nash*, which will appear in June next.

[1] His solicitor.

"This morning I received *The Manchester Courier* containing your sketch of Hatton, which I think very nicely done. It is really a very pleasing Memoir. . . . I am perfectly astonished at the sum Hatton has left—£750,000. I had no idea he was so rich. I rejoice that H. Wood has got £100,000 with Richmond House and Hatton."

"*March 17th*, 1879.

"I have promised to dine with our friend Harry Wood —or Mr. Wood-Hatton of Hatton as he is to be styled in future—on the 3rd April at Penrhos House, Rugby, to meet you and celebrate your 79th birthday. It will be a great occasion, and I shall look forward to it with pleasurable anticipation. We are to have wondrous port of the finest vintages—1815, 1820, and 1827. I hope you will be in great force. I am really much obliged to Mr. Wood-Hatton for asking me, for though I am really very busy, as you are aware, I would lay aside any work for such an interesting event. Strange, I intended to dedicate my forthcoming tale, *Beau Nash*, to Hatton. As I cannot do this, I have told Mr. Wood-Hatton I shall dedicate it to *him*, and he is very much pleased by the offer."

Beau Nash was accordingly inscribed to Mr. Wood-Hatton, F.S.A., on its publication in the summer of 1879 by Routledge, in three volumes.[1] This story of Bath under its most famous director proved successful, and to Crossley the author wrote :—

"I am glad you like *Beau Nash*. I had some difficulty in arranging my description of the place, as the city was only half built at the time of my story. I think Graves

[1] The subsequent one volume edition contained four illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

and Ralph Allen make good characters. I read, with great interest, the report of the first meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, of which you are the President. Your address was very good and very characteristic. I have no doubt the new Society will be firmly established, but you must not neglect the good old Chetham Society. Are you bringing out any tracts in the latter Society likely to furnish me with a new Lancashire story? I want to set to work again. Are you aware that a new and well-edited edition of Ormerod's *Cheshire* is about to appear? The work will be published in parts by Messrs. Routledge. . . . Poor dear Raines! He is a great loss to both of us. I rejoice to find that your health is so good. I firmly believe that you will attain to ninety years like Graves—though you will not practise his abstinence—and will establish half a dozen more societies."

Ainsworth visited Manchester in the autumn of that year, and enjoyed some dinners and chats in the company of his old friend.

During the last two years of his life he corresponded frequently with his cousin, Dr. James Bower Harrison. The latter possessed a good deal of the talent of his family, and was the author of a very remarkable and clever psychological allegory entitled *The Vision of Asmodeus and the Reflections of Dr. Anselmo*, 1880. Writing to his cousin on this production, Ainsworth said:—

"Hill View Lodge, Reigate,

"*January 22nd*, 1880.

"My dear James,

"I have to thank you for the remarkable pamphlet, which has really quite surprised me. . . . I have read

quite enough to satisfy me of its extraordinary merit. It ought to be popular not only with the Profession, but generally. The *Religio Medici*, with which the book concludes, is a very fine and thoughtful piece of composition, and does you the utmost credit. I hope to hear that you have sold the first edition. . . .

"For myself, I live here very quietly, but I shall draw nearer London in the summer. I suffer awfully from neuralgic pains. As you will perceive, I cannot give a very satisfactory report of myself. My handwriting will show you how desperately shaky I am."

"*March*, 1880.

"I am much obliged to you for sending me Baxter's portrait of my old friend Crossley. Though somewhat of a caricature, I think it exceedingly like; the learned octogenarian is in wonderful preservation. . . . But for your kind attention in sending me *Momus*, I don't fancy I should have seen this portrait. For the last three months I have been suffering from a severe attack of neuralgia, originating in shingles, which has fixed itself on my left side, and pains me exceedingly at night—very much interfering with my rest. . . . However, I persuade myself that the worst is over, and that I shall get rapidly better when the warm weather comes, and I shall be able to take my usual exercise.

"I have sent you a copy of *Men of Mark* for March, containing a photograph, which I scarcely think you will recognise as a portrait of your relative. However, it is accounted a tolerably good likeness, and will show you what I have come to at 75."

To Crossley, on the same day, he wrote:—

". . . I am glad you like Routledge's edition of my works. I myself regard the series with some surprise.

I quite agree with you that the books read better in this form, than as originally published in three volumes. Whether I shall write another tale I cannot say. Perhaps, if I get hold of a good subject it may incite me to take up my pen once more."

In April, Crossley came to town, and he dined with Ainsworth at the Charing Cross Hotel, this being the last of the many dinners the friends had had together in London during a period of over fifty years.

In May, 1880, Ainsworth went abroad for a course of German Baths, in order to seek some alleviation from the neuralgia which so troubled him. Once more back at Reigate, he wrote to Crossley, in August :—

" I have just received from Mr. Howorth, of Manchester, a copy of the new and admirable edition of our old friend Canon Parkinson's *Old Church Clock*. The little book well deserved to be brought out in this style, and the Editor has performed his task most excellently. . . . Pray tell him how much gratified I am by his reference to me [1] in the Preface. I really am charmed with the book. All is well done. Paper, print, binding, illustrations, biographical notices, local descriptions, index—all are excellent. 'Tis a pity the worthy Canon cannot see the book."

At the close of the year Ainsworth spent a month at the Granville Hotel, St. Leonards. During April and May, 1881, he wrote to his cousin, Dr. Harrison :—

" I am very much obliged to you for sending me *The Manchester Guardian* containing the excellent article, *Cross Street Chapel, sixty years since.* I have read it with the greatest interest, as my own recollections extend to precisely the same date. . . . I feel almost

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 341.

certain it is from the pen of Mr. John P. Aston.[1] Should my conjecture be correct, pray tell him how much I am pleased. It is really an admirable piece of description, as I myself can testify."

"Accept my best thanks for Lewis' reprint of *The Manchester and Salford Directory for 1788.* It contains much that interests me. I see our grandfather [2] then resided in Brazennose Street—I suppose in the house which I remember. Fustian manufacturers seemed to abound in those days, and I have also discovered that a Bleacher was then called a Whitster.

"I have been hard at work—literary work—during the whole of the spring, and I have not quite finished my book."

This was his last work, *Stanley Brereton* (a modern story), then appearing as a serial in *The Bolton Weekly Journal.*

We now come to, perhaps, the most momentous and gratifying incident in Ainsworth's life—the banquet given in his honour, in his native city, by the Mayor of Manchester, Mr. Thomas Baker (who was knighted in 1883).[3]

Concerning the arrangements for the function, Ainsworth wrote to Crossley in July and August, 1881 :—

"Very likely you may have heard that I have agreed to dine with the Mayor of Manchester on Thursday, September 15th. He sent me a very gratifying letter. Mr. Charles Rowley [4] proposed to give some illustrations

[1] The article was written by Mrs. Sidney Potter.

[2] The Rev. Ralph Harrison.

[3] He was the uncle of Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury.

[4] Who arranged all the details of the banquet. Mr. Rowley also conducted the arrangements for entertaining Henry Irving at the Queen's Hotel, Manchester, in July, 1881.

of my works in a little tract to be presented to the Guests at the Dinner, but, on consideration, I do not like the idea, as it might possibly be misconstrued; but I see no objection to a reprint of your excellent Memoir, containing a list of my works (which may be completed to date) accompanied by a good photographic portrait. I think you will approve of this idea. . . . If the Memoir is given, let *a proof be sent me.* When Mr. Rowley was in town, he dined with me at the Junior Carlton Club, and I was very much pleased with him.

"I anticipate a very pleasant *friendly* dinner at the Town Hall, Manchester. . . . The Mayor appears to me an uncommonly nice fellow, with whom I shall get on capitally. I am not quite so sure about the advantage of that list of my works, with the photograph, but perhaps it may produce a good effect. I hope so. I see you have become President of the Record Society. You are a most wonderful fellow.

"On consideration, I think you had better not express to Mr. Rowley any disapproval of the portrait and list of works. It is evidently his notion, and the Mayor has acted upon his suggestion. . . . Take care *Sir John Chiverton* is not placed among the list of my works. I saw it in the list sent to me by the Mayor, and struck it out. I should be annoyed if this is neglected." [1]

"The Mayor has sent me proofs of the little pamphlet, which contains a chronological list of my works. This I have corrected and returned. It makes no mention of *Sir John Chiverton.* The Dedication of *The Lancashire Witches* to yourself is given. I have mentioned the presentation of Pickersgill's portrait to the Chetham Library in a footnote to a brief Biographical Sketch. The Mayor must be going to a considerable expense

[1] Ainsworth was anxious to avoid any disturbance of the harmony of the proceedings by a revival of the question of the joint authorship of this work, Mr. J. P. Aston being still alive at the time.

about this pamphlet. The Mayor has asked me to take up my quarters at the Town Hall, but I think I shall elect the Queen's Hotel." [1]

With his characteristic ingenuous vanity of his good looks in the days of yore, Ainsworth wrote to Dr. Harrison, in connection with the portrait which was to be included in the souvenir pamphlet :—

" I am much obliged to you for sending me the Mayor of Manchester's letter. If you send him the photograph taken for *Men of the Time*,[2] I will send him an engraving from Maclise's portrait taken some years ago. He will then see what I *have been*, as well as what *I am*."

As the great event drew near, he received the following letter from the popular editor of *The World* :—

" 1, York Street, Covent Garden, W.C.,

" *August* 30*th*, 1881.

" My dear Ainsworth,

" I see that Manchester is going to give you a dinner. I hope Manchester will invite me. I would certainly go far and further to do you honour.

" Sincerely yours,

" Edmund Yates."

Ainsworth, of course, procured a card for his friend, and notified Crossley : " Mr. Yates has received and accepted the Mayor's Invitation, and will be ready to respond for the Press."

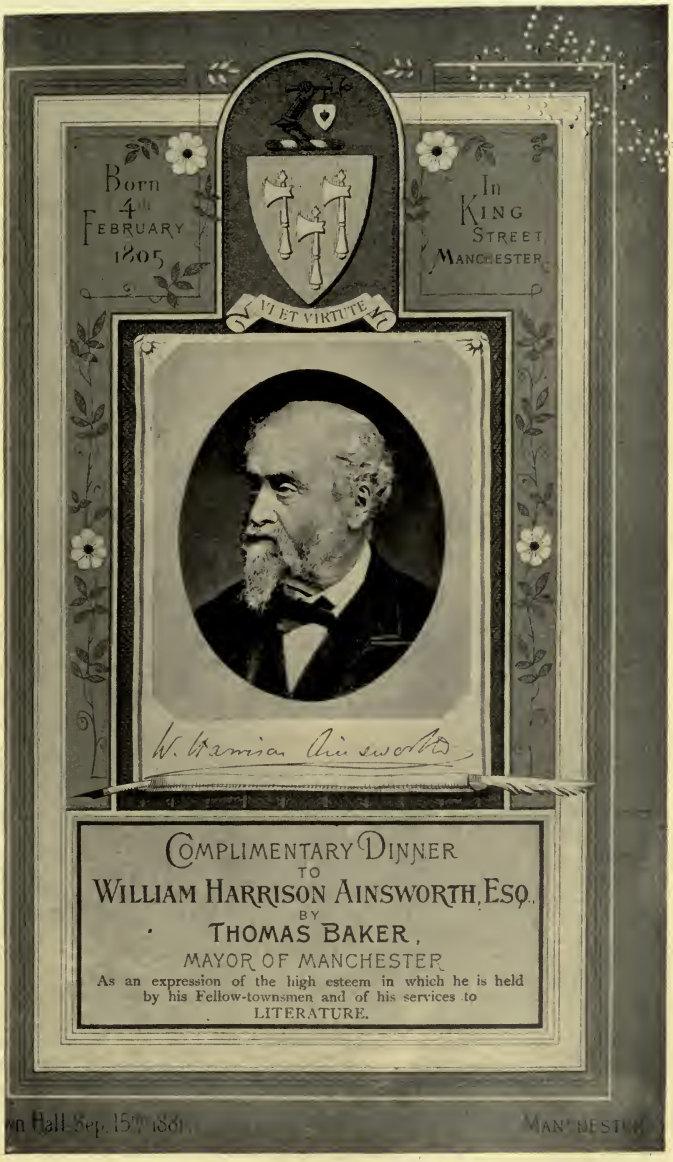
[1] Ainsworth was also invited to stay with his solicitor, Mr. Hinde, and with his cousin, Dr. Harrison, at The Mount, Higher Broughton, but being in ill-health he stayed at the Queen's Hotel during his visit.

[2] *Men of Mark*, March, 1880.

And so, at last, the eventful day, Thursday, September 15th, 1881, arrived; Ainsworth was duly entertained at dinner by the Mayor of Manchester, and a large company, representative of the most distinguished literary men of Lancashire, assembled to do him honour. To quote from the contemporary report of the proceedings, "The Mayor received his guests—the bells of the Town Hall merrily ringing the while—in the reception-room, and such had been the happy selection made in issuing the invitations that everybody seemed to know everybody else, and there was, therefore, no stiffness and no need of formal introductions." As a souvenir of the occasion, each guest was presented with a beautifully printed brochure (designed by Mr. Thomas N. Storer). This contained a photograph of Ainsworth,[1] his coat-of-arms, a short memoir, and one of the original illustrations from, respectively, *Rookwood*, *Crichton*, *Jack Sheppard*, *The Tower of London*, *Guy Fawkes*, *Old St. Paul's*, *The Miser's Daughter*, *Windsor Castle*, *The Lancashire Witches*, and *Mervyn Clitheroe*, all accompanied by some appropriate letterpress. Finally, there was appended "A Chronological List of William Harrison Ainsworth's Works," which was strangely inaccurate in the dates given and omitted all mention of *Preston Fight*.

The dinner took place in the Mayor's banqueting-room, and among the numerous guests were: Ralph F. Ainsworth, M.D.; W. E. A. Axon; Samuel Crompton, M.D.; James Crossley, F.S.A.; James Croston, F.S.A.; J. P. Earwaker, F.S.A.; John Evans; Colonel Henry Fishwick, F.S.A.; Rev. Silas K. Hocking; James Bower

[1] Reproduced opposite.



HARRISON AINSWORTH, AT THE AGE OF SEVENTY-SIX.
Portrait given on the first page of the souvenir brochure.

Harrison, M.D.; Howard J. Harrison; Abel Heywood; H. H. Howorth, F.S.A.; Alexander Ireland; J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A.; Charles W. Sutton, chief librarian of the Manchester Free Library; Edwin Waugh; Professor A. S. Wilkins, M.A.; and Edmund Yates, editor of *The World*. Mrs. G. Linnæus Banks,[1] Mrs. Stanford Harris, and Miss Jessie Fothergill [2]—representing the literary ladies of Manchester—and Miss Mabel Harrison (Ainsworth's cousin) dined with the Mayoress in the private dining-room, and later proceeded to the banqueting-hall to hear the speeches.

The MAYOR, after giving the toasts of the Queen and the Royal Family, said :—

"I have now to ask your attention while I propose the health of the gentleman in whose honour we are met—(applause)—distinguished as being a fellow-citizen with us, his immediate ancestors having for several generations resided within a very short distance of the spot whereon we are now assembled, and distinguished also for the possession of the highest literary ability of any living native of Manchester. (Applause.) My personal acquaintance with Mr. Ainsworth, though it dates back some forty years, has, unfortunately for myself, not been of an intimate character. But the mental intimacy which I have with Scott, and Bulwer, and Southey, and Thackeray, all men of my day whom I did not know, has in his case the vitality of just so much personal knowledge as has enabled me, while

[1] Author of *The Manchester Man*.

[2] It is interesting to note that Miss Fothergill, the author of the popular *The First Violin*, like Ainsworth laid the scene of one of her books—*Wellfields*—at Whalley.

I was reading his books, to picture to myself the personal appearance of the author of them. (Hear, hear.) I may, perhaps, refer to other circumstances which bring Mr. Ainsworth in closer relation to me. He was brought up to the same profession as myself, and the gentleman with whom he served his articles closed the active duties of his life in Manchester by occupying for two years the exalted position which the kindness of my fellow-citizens has called me to occupy at the present time. (Applause.) I was intimately acquainted with Mr. Alexander Kay, and was on visiting terms with him, and though I was not at the time a member of the Corporation of Manchester, I have been informed on most unquestionable authority that Mr. Alexander Kay was the best Mayor that Manchester ever possessed. (Hear, hear.) The thought, gentlemen, that we should pay some mark of respect to Mr. Ainsworth has passed through the minds of several gentlemen who are now present. (Hear.) My position enables me to-night to give that thought a local habitation and a name. We all knew that our fellow-citizen had through a long life contributed very greatly to the intellectual pleasure of his countrymen, that he made many a heart glad, and that many a reader of his works had risen from the perusal of them refreshed, invigorated, amused, and instructed. (Hear, hear.) It would have been a very easy thing to fill the great hall of this building with admirers of his genius. (Hear, hear.) It would have been very easy to bring here to-night all the eloquence which this city possesses ; but this was not my object. It was rather to make this a gathering of local literary men, who had a kindred spirit with our fellow-townsman

and the power of appreciating fully his great ability and genius. And while I wished through them to pay a compliment to him, I wished also through him to pay a compliment to them, and to show my sense of literary merit, though it does not attain the popularity of *Guy Fawkes* or *Windsor Castle.* (Applause.) And now, gentlemen, in reference to something else. Manchester does not possess many living lady authors. But all that I know I have invited, and they are now present. (Applause.) I should have rejoiced if I could have brought into this room with Mr. Ainsworth the survivors of his days at the Manchester Grammar School. The Rev. George Heron, who was on the same form with him at the Grammar School, would have been with us to-night but for an important engagement at a distance which he could not possibly put off ; and the Rev. John Howard Marsden wrote to me to say that it would have given him the very greatest pleasure to have been present this evening if he had been twenty years younger, so that he could have hazarded a journey so far north from the place of his residence in Essex. (Hear, hear.) And with regard to Sir Humphrey de Trafford, who is the only other person that I could ascertain as having been at the Grammar School with Mr. Ainsworth, the answer I have received from him is that he is too great an invalid to attend. We may congratulate ourselves that Mr. Ainsworth is in a sufficiently hale state of body and mind to be with us to-night to receive our recognition of his great literary abilities. (Applause.) It forms no part, gentlemen, of my duty to-night to offer any criticisms upon Mr. Ainsworth's voluminous works. I may, however, remark that he has embodied in them just so much

of historical matter to give great interest to his stories; in point of fact, to make them most delightful reading. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He has also done another thing which gives him a claim to the gratitude of every native of this county, by introducing into his works the legends and the characters of past times in this county—(hear, hear)—and by making the folk-lore and speech of Lancashire a distinctive literature. (Applause.) And now, just one other subject. It is fitting that I should say something about the amount of popularity which Mr. Ainsworth's works enjoy in this his native city. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) And on this point I am enabled to speak with some authority. In our Manchester public free libraries there are 250 volumes of Mr. Ainsworth's different works. (Applause.) During the last twelve months those volumes have been read 7660 times—(applause)—mostly by the artisan class of readers. (Hear, hear.) And this means that twenty volumes of his works are being perused in Manchester by readers of the free libraries every day all the year through. (Applause.) My statistics would be incomplete if I did not tell you which of his books are most read. It would be a pleasure to me if I could only read Mr. Ainsworth's mind and know what the conviction is on this point which he entertains. (Hear, hear.) Whether I shall astonish him, or whether the result of my inquiry agrees with the result which prevails in his own mind, I really cannot tell. But I give you six of his most popular works, and in the order in which they are most read. The first is—what? (Laughter.) *The Tower of London.* (Loud applause.) The next is—what? The ladies can tell me. (Laughter.) It is *The Lancashire Witches.*

The third is *Old St. Paul's*. Then comes *Windsor Castle*, *The Miser's Daughter*, and *The Manchester Rebels*.[1] (Applause.) I think now, gentlemen, I have said enough to make you agree with me in saying that we may consider ourselves very proud in having such a man as Mr. Harrison Ainsworth among us. (Applause.) We may consider ourselves very proud in having him here to-night to tell him how much we appreciate his genius and his industry. (Applause.) And he, too, will, I think, be gratified to hear that he has given and is giving so much pleasure and instruction to the reading part of the community of England. (Applause.) I have only one more remark to make and then I conclude. A work of fiction which may have been produced in solitude and silence is sent into the world and becomes the means of interesting and enlightening millions. I ask you to drink the health of Mr. William Harrison Ainsworth." (Loud applause.)

The toast was enthusiastically honoured.

AINSWORTH, who was received with cheers on rising to reply, said :—

"With those ringing cheers in my ear, I scarcely know how to thank you ; but I can assure you that I really think this is the most gratifying moment of my life. I feel proud, and beyond measure indebted to my

[1] By the courtesy of the Manchester Public Library officials I am enabled to give the corresponding particulars for 1909. In that year the Manchester Public Libraries contained 457 copies of Ainsworth's works, and these were issued to readers over 6000 times during the year. *The Tower of London* still keeps its place as the most popular, being issued 410 times. The next in number of issues were *Guy Fawkes*, *Windsor Castle*, and *The Lancashire Witches*.—S. M. E.

excellent friend the Mayor, for the kindly welcome he has given me. Many similar compliments have been paid me, but none has afforded me so much gratification. If honour is to be paid me, it is here, in my native city, that I would have it. Nothing has delighted me more than to be styled, as I have been, 'The Lancashire Novelist.' (Hear, hear.) You have heard it said to-night that the most popular of my works is *The Tower of London*. It may be so, but I can assure you that my desire has really been to write a Lancashire novel, a novel that should please the whole county, and I don't care whether it pleased anybody else. (Applause.) If I really thought that the designation which I have latterly received of 'The Lancashire Novelist' were justified, I should indeed feel proud. I hope I may deserve it; I hope it may attach to my name. My great ambition has been to connect my name as an author with the city of my birth, and with this aim I have chosen certain subjects that would give me a chance of doing so. I sought to describe the Rebellion of '45 and the visit to Manchester of the unfortunate Prince Charles. With the old city as it existed at the period I was tolerably familiar, from the views I had seen of it, and could conjure up its picturesque black and white houses and other ancient structures, most of which, I grieve to say, have now entirely disappeared. In the days I refer to there was a very strong Jacobite feeling in Lancashire, and especially amongst the oldest families in Manchester—(Hear, hear)—many of whom were devoted to what they deemed the 'good cause.' Prominent amongst these were Dr. Byrom and his charming daughter Beppy, both of whom had always the strongest attraction for

me. Tom Syddall, the Jacobite barber of Manchester—(applause)—was likewise a favourite, as were Dr. Deacon and his sons and Jemmy Dawson. In *Beatrice Tyldesley* I have described the Jacobite trials in Manchester, in 1694. In *The Leaguer of Lathom, a Tale of the Civil War in Lancashire,* and in *Preston Fight; or the Insurrection of 1715,* I had other periods to deal with and other parts of the county to depict; and in the locality of *The Lancashire Witches* [1] I had very picturesque and curious scenery to describe, and I strove to do justice to it. (Hear, hear.) But it is in a modern story, portions of which may almost be termed autobiographical, that I have described my early days in Manchester and neighbourhood—my old schoolfellows and schoolmasters, Dr. Smith and Dr. Elsdale, and I have now had my reward. (Applause.) I have been honoured by the Chief Magistrate of my native city, who has bidden me to a Banquet at which I have been received with a warmth I shall never forget. (Applause.) I thank you again most heartily for the reception you have accorded me. I shall ever look back with pride and pleasure to this day. (Applause.) And now, before sitting down, I would fain say a word respecting a much valued and excellent friend; I allude to Mr. Gilbert Winter, whom I regard as one of the best specimens of the Manchester men of the last generation—(applause)—a model of kindly hospitality, a man of business, a man of the strictest honour, and untiring in his zeal to serve a friend. (Applause.) Mr. Gilbert Winter must have been known to many

[1] The opera founded on Ainsworth's *Lancashire Witches* was being performed at Liverpool at the time the Manchester Banquet took place.

gentlemen now present; and I am sure they will concur in the opinion I have expressed of him. (Hear, hear.) He resided in the house on the Cheetham Road now occupied by another old friend of mine—(applause)—for whom I have an equally strong regard, and whom I am happy to see beside me to-night—I allude to Mr. James Crossley. (Applause.) I need not expatiate on Mr. Crossley's social qualities, on his learning and scholarship, on his varied and extensive reading. It is not an extravagant compliment to say that he may be compared to the great Dr. Johnson himself. (Hear, hear.) As I cannot doubt that the honour paid to me by the Mayor is due to my having gained some distinction as a chronicler of Lancashire, I may congratulate myself on obeying the impulse that prompted me to select that particular walk. (Hear, hear.) I believe my task to be well-nigh accomplished, and can scarcely hope to write another tale, but should I do so I shall return to the old ground, and strive to maintain the honourable distinction I have acquired as 'The Lancashire Novelist.' (Applause.) For upwards of forty years my pen has rarely long been idle. Occasionally the novelist is a harder worker than he is supposed to be. Mr. Mayor and gentlemen, I am thankful to have lived to see this day." (Applause.)

Mr. JAMES CROSSLEY, F.S.A., proposed the next toast, "The Archæological and Historical Societies of the County Palatine of Lancaster." In the course of his speech he said:—

"I might say a great deal of these societies with which I have the honour to be connected. . . . I think the

aspect of the toast that I am most called to direct myself to is that which concerns my excellent friend, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. (Hear, hear.) When, gentlemen, I look upon that long series of novels which he has published, extending, in the good orthodox three-volume form, to somewhere about one hundred volumes, I cannot but consider that there is a possibility of the time arriving when his ample resources may come to an end, for, as the fertility of the most fertile must have its limit, it may be impossible to have always at hand plots and subjects and characters. (Laughter.) When that time does come—when, like the Governors of the Bank of England, who, seeing bullion going out more rapidly than is consistent with financial policy and, perhaps, with financial security, think it necessary to call in some agency which will rectify and readjust the balance—if ever that does happen to Mr. Ainsworth, I may say he cannot do better than direct himself to the societies which are embodied in the toast. (Laughter.) Old Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge, used to encourage his clerical friends by saying, 'My dear Sir, whenever your theological cistern is drawn dry, come to me; I have one hundred skeletons of sermons which are ready at your service, and which will keep you on your legs for a considerable time to come.' (Laughter.) The reverend gentleman's metaphors were rather confused, but still the offer, I have no doubt, gave great satisfaction—(Laughter)—and must have been a comfort and consolation to his clerical friends. (Laughter.) Should it be necessary for our excellent friend, Mr. Ainsworth, to direct himself to some assistance of that kind, I can, I think, on behalf of these societies say that we will

find him the skeletons of one hundred historical novels—(Laughter)—which with his master hand and his creative power can be made instinct with life, and form a very considerable addition to that long procession of heroes and heroines with which he has made us familiar, and which are extensive enough almost to form a literature of themselves, and which certainly will require and undoubtedly deserve—and I recommend it to the attention of Mr. Charles Sutton if he happens to be here—an Ainsworth Bibliography." (Applause.)

[Crossley then proceeded to relate his reminiscences of the dinner given to celebrate the completion of *The Tower of London*, in 1841, previously quoted,[1] and continued :—]

"Mr. Ainsworth has done much excellent work. He has had, and it must have been a great satisfaction to him, the pleasure of seeing the avidity with which his works are read by the sons and grandsons of those by whom they were read when they first appeared. He has also the satisfaction of knowing that he is popular wherever the English language prevails. (Hear.) His works have been translated into at least five of the great European languages. He has received from all sides kindly tributes, many of which he will, no doubt, consider as amongst his best possessions. But it has happened also, by one of those extraordinary chances, I may say, that do occur, that no voice of a collective or public kind, no general voice of tribute has ever reached him from his native town which has now become one of the great cities of the world. It has been reserved

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I, p. 416.

for our excellent Mayor, with that instinctive sense of what is just and right and fitting, and with that prompt liberality which has characterised his career as Mayor, to remedy this deficiency. He has afforded Manchester, through this dinner, the opportunity of recognising the claims and merits of one of the worthiest of its sons. (Applause.) I am sure the Mayor must be gratified in looking round to-night and seeing what an array of genius, of various talent, extensive knowledge, and of literary power he has been able to call to meet Mr. Ainsworth on this occasion. Though I am no prophet, I will venture to predict that, when the occurrences of his mayoralty pass hereafter under review, the Ainsworth dinner will not be considered the least interesting, the least honourable, or the least memorable, whether as respects himself or Manchester." (Hear, hear, and applause.)

Mr. H. H. HOWORTH,[1] F.S.A., in the course of his reply to the toast of "The Archæological and Historical Societies of the County Palatine of Lancaster," said:—

"Our smoking climate and our whirling machinery are poor accompaniments to the voices of the Muses; and we are constantly told that here men are too overwhelmed with the ever-pressing present to have much time to look backwards or to look onwards. On every side the literary man has to meet the questions of a successful Philistinism—Does this pay? Are you making a fortune by it? Mr. Mayor, is not this very fact a sufficient justification? Do not we all long beyond measure to escape as much as we can from the pressure and the commonplace of this everyday life of ours to where more

[1] Created K.C.I.E. in 1892.

doetry and more romance may be found ? (Hear, hear.) But if this be granted, we shall still be told that Lancashire does not afford materials for literature—our rough moorlands and their rough inhabitants were not given to romantic ways. Is this so ? May we not claim that the most limpid streams and the most sparkling water come out of the most rugged rocks ? (Applause.) . . . Gentlemen, whatever walk in literature we adopt, save one, we shall inevitably have one fate. We shall all be found out presently, and superseded ; all, I mean, save the poet and the writer of romances, who deal with the evergreen and changeless passions of men and women. It is their good fortune to paint the past and the future in colours that the eye never wearies of looking at—colours mixed with the glamour of old Time." (Applause.)

Mr. R. C. CHRISTIE, Chancellor of the Diocese, proposed "The Literature of the County Palatine of Lancaster."

Mr. EDWIN WAUGH, who was very heartily received, in responding to the toast, said that he was afraid that the speech to which they had just listened had taken all the wind out of his poor sails. There were many men round that hospitable board who could have acknowledged the toast in happier terms than himself, and his position reminded him of an incident which happened last week in an hotel at York, where he was staying at the time. One of the gentlemen who was staying at the hotel particularly requested the porter to call him up at six o'clock next

morning. The porter forgot all about it, and the gentleman slept on and missed his train. Coming furiously downstairs at breakfast time, he rang for the porter and asked why he had not been called up at six o'clock. "I beg your pardon," the porter said, "I made a mistake; but, never mind, Sir, I called two other men up who didn't want to get up." (Laughter.) Now at that moment he (Mr. Waugh) felt somewhat in the position of one of those two men. (Laughter.) But he supposed he must say something. As we looked around we found there was hardly a county in the kingdom which had not been remarkable for one or more men of eminence in art or letters or in science. Some of the counties had achieved what might be called a speciality in the character of their literature. And neither last nor least among them was the county of Lancaster. Here there had been an unusual list of authors, some of whom had pushed their way up through the hard soil, like moorland flowers which grew without the aid of the cultivator, whilst many others were men of the greatest eminence, who had had all the advantages of school and college. They had with them that evening one of the finest existing links connecting past generations with the present. (Applause.) It was a pleasant thing thus to welcome the magician to the scenes of youth, around which his romantic genius had delighted to play during long years of absence from them. Mr. Harrison Ainsworth might well say in the words of Moore :—

> "And doth not a meeting like this make amends
> For all the long years I've been wand'ring away,
> To see thus around me my youth's early friends,
> All smiling and kind as in that happy day?

" Although over some of your brows, as o'er mine,
The snowfall of Time may be stealing, what then ?
Like Alps in the sunset, thus lighted by wine,
They'll wear the gay tinge of youth's roses again."

(Applause.)

Mr. J. FOX TURNER proposed " The Lancashire Witches," and Dr. R. F. AINSWORTH responded.

Mr. T. R. WILKINSON, in proposing " The Press," gave an interesting sketch of the history of journalism in Manchester and London.

Mr. EDMUND YATES, in replying to the toast, said that he had that evening the pleasure of making the acquaintance of after-dinner Manchester ; and even in the midst of enjoyment, he would hazard the friendly criticism that though it was eloquent it was not concise. (Laughter.) One advantage of this he fully appreciated, as the time was so far advanced as to relieve him from any necessity of making a speech. (Laughter.) It had been a special pleasure to him to be there that night, and to see the way in which the town of Mr. Ainsworth's birth honoured the great Lancashire novelist, for he was not only a friend of many years' standing, but had been a friend of his (Mr. Yates's) father [1] before him. And that reminded him of a little incident which had never been publicly narrated before. Many years ago his hankerings after literature led to the production of an article which he sent to *Ainsworth's Magazine*. He

[1] Fred Yates, actor, and lessee of the Adelphi Theatre at the time the dramatic versions of Ainsworth's *Crichton* and *Jack Sheppard*, etc., were produced there, 1837–40.

need scarcely remark that this production was a poem. It was wholly original, and strikingly clever. (Loud laughter.) It was composed, he regretted to say, in church during the abstraction of a dull sermon. (Laughter.) Contrary to the supposed use and wont of editors, Mr. Ainsworth replied at once by letter, in which he spoke with much friendship of his (Mr. Yates's) father's son. Shortly after Mr. Ainsworth sent him a proof, and it had not been in his possession many minutes before he had carefully corrected all the stupendous blunders by which the printer had vainly striven to mar the perfection of that work of art. It was quickly corrected and quickly posted. He opened the next number of *Ainsworth's Magazine* with a trembling hand, but the poem was not there. (Laughter.) It was not in the next number. He wrote to Mr. Ainsworth, but in vain. He wrote him begging letters, he wrote him threatening letters, but down to that very day the poem had never appeared. This dread secret had weighed upon him for a quarter of a century, and he thought this was a fitting opportunity of relieving his mind of the intolerable burden. (Laughter.) He would content himself with thanking them very cordially for the way in which they had drunk "The Press." The Mayor of Manchester had set a most praiseworthy example in this departure from the ordinary routine of civic feasts. He thought the example was one that ought to be imitated. A banquet with, it might be, something in the form of a testimonial, was a very pleasant way in which literature could be recognized. On the part of his colleagues of the press, he would say that they were ready, whenever called upon, to give up the name of their birthplaces to the

mayors of the respective boroughs which had had the honour of giving them birth whenever those dignitaries were prepared to follow the magnificent lead of the chief magistrate of the ancient town of Manchester. (Laughter and cheers.)

Mr. E. J. BROADFIELD, in proposing "The Mayor and Corporation of Manchester," said he felt sure that the Mayor would have no more brilliant day recorded in the history of his mayoralty than that of the Banquet to Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. (Applause.)

The Mayor's response concluded the speeches.

This public tribute to his fame, and token of his establishment as The Lancashire Novelist and Manchester's greatest literary figure, was intensely gratifying to Ainsworth: and yet as he stood there—an aged, white-haired man—hearing the cheers in his honour, his joy must have been strangely allied with pathetic, poignant memories of long-past days and long-dead friends; memories of his romantic, happy boyhood, with its dreams and ambitions long since realized and now consummated; and memories of that other dinner, over forty years agone, when, in the height of his fame, he was honoured by his native city conjointly with Dickens. As he gazed around the banquet-table of 1881, the faces he saw were mainly those of a younger and unfamiliar generation; and he and Crossley must have felt like ghosts from another era—even Manchester itself entirely changed since the days of their youth, its narrow streets and picturesque timber houses vanished like a city of dreams.

On the following day, 16th September, Ainsworth was entertained at dinner by the Kersal Bowling Club, at the Kersal Moor Hotel; and on Sunday, the 18th, he attended service in Manchester Cathedral, accompanied by the Mayor, who subsequently invited several friends to meet his distinguished guest at his private residence, Skerton House, Old Trafford.

Manchester's final tribute to her most famous literary son was only just in time. This was his last public appearance—the last flicker of the expiring light. Few of the guests at that memorable banquet realized that they were listening to the words of a dying man, for a little over three months later he was no more. Perhaps, with the intuition of one who is near the end of his pilgrimage, he knew that he should see Manchester never again, for on this—his last—visit he wandered around, taking leave as it were, all the old haunts of his boyhood, changed though many had become. He was accompanied by Mr. John Evans, who has recorded :— [1]

" Rambling through some of the principal streets of Manchester with The Lancashire Novelist (a privilege which fell to my lot on two or three days during his last visit to his native city) was a memorable treat. We found, however, much to his expressed regret, ' little of the old town now left,' and sought in vain for ' those picturesque black and white timber habitations, with pointed gables and latticed windows,' which formed the delight of his boyhood and the subject of some of his happiest descriptions in manhood. Among those

[1] *The Manchester Quarterly*, 1882.

rambles was one down King Street, and another through a portion of Long Millgate. In our way down the former, in the direction of Lloyd's Bank (where, as he explained, ' for the sake of auld lang syne, he kept a small account '), he pointed out the spot, now occupied by the entrance to the Liverpool and London Chambers, where once stood his father's house, in which he, the novelist, was born nearly seventy-seven years before. . . . True to his sympathies with the scenes of his boyhood, Ainsworth lamented the wholesale demolition of the old black and white houses in the neighbourhood—gave a sort of shudder at the garish new Grammar School buildings, and regarded with quiet interest the poor old broken-down relic, formerly known as ' The Poet's Corner.' "

And then he left Manchester for ever: fifty-seven years had fled since he set out on his first journey to London, in the days of mail coach and gallant team, when Life lay fair before him.

. . . . . .

Back again at Reigate, Ainsworth wrote to Crossley :—

" 21*st September*, 1881.

" I have written to Mr. Evans about the revised Report of the Banquet. I intend to use the Report as an introduction to my forthcoming novel, *Stanley Brereton*. It will form a little chapter in my Biography. Are you aware that *The Manchester Examiner* is about to publish *Mervyn Clitheroe* in a serial form ?

" In *The World* of to-day I see you are compared to Coleridge. *Punch* of to-day contains a ' Fancy Portrait of a distinguished Lancashire Novelist ' which will amuse you."

W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.

TO THE GREATEST AXE-AND-NECK-ROMANCER OF OUR TIME, WHO IS QUITE AT THE HEAD OF HIS PROFESSION, WE DEDICATE THIS BLOCK. *AD MULTOS ANNOS!*

Reproduced from "Punch" (September 21st, 1881) by kind permission of the Proprietors and of the artist, Mr. Linley Sambourne.

Ainsworth here alludes to *Punch's* admirable cartoon,[1] drawn by Mr. Linley Sambourne, commenting on the recent celebrations in honour of The Lancashire Novelist.

The author's last story, *Stanley Brereton*, published by Routledge, in three volumes,[2] was inscribed to his recent host in Manchester, Mr. Thomas Baker, as follows :—

"My dear Mr. Mayor,

"As I deem the banquet given by you in my honour, in my native city of Manchester, one of the most important events of my life, I shall endeavour to evince my sense of it by inscribing this tale (*Stanley Brereton*) to you. To you, moreover, and to the friends assembled on the occasion, I owe the gratifying title conferred upon me of 'The Lancashire Novelist,' and I assure you I feel extremely proud of the distinction. And never surely was there a happier idea, or one more tastefully carried out, than the presentation to each guest at your banquet of an artistic little brochure containing a portrait and memoir of the author you had so greatly honoured, with specimens of the illustrations of his works. As an introduction to this tale I have given a revised report of the banquet that your readers may judge of it.

"Your deeply obliged

"*September*, 1881." "W. Harrison Ainsworth.

A revised report of the speeches at the banquet was also issued separately as a supplement to, and bound with, a few extra copies of the illustrated brochure itself. Concerning this, Ainsworth wrote to Mr. Evans :—

"I think it looks exceedingly well, and does credit

[1] Reproduced opposite.

[2] The subsequent edition in one volume contains four illustrations by Mr. Frederick Gilbert.

to all concerned. In my opinion, you and Crossley have decided for the best in limiting the edition of the pamphlet to forty copies. The brochure will now always be scarce, and consequently eagerly sought for.[1] I am greatly obliged to you for sending me the report of the Grammar School dinner in *The Manchester Guardian*, in which such gratifying mention was made of me."

And to Crossley he wrote :—

"I am delighted. I think you have done your part admirably, as I am sure everybody will acknowledge who takes up the little brochure. And your trouble will not have been thrown away, as this Banquet will form an important festival in your own biography as well as mine."

"*November* 11*th*, 1881.

"I have the pleasure to send you a copy of *Stanley Brereton*. Like all the Tauchnitz editions, it is very charmingly printed. The Mayor was good enough to send me *The Manchester Courier* containing the report of his re-election, at which I am rejoiced—for he is a most excellent fellow. I have written to offer him my hearty congratulations. It certainly is very gratifying to me that he has been complimented on this Banquet on his re-election."

Only a few weeks of mortal existence remained for Ainsworth now, and these were passed quietly at St. Mary's Road, Reigate, in one of two small villas called Belvidere, whither he had removed from Hill View Lodge in the spring of 1881. In the solitude of his last days many sad reflections must have thronged about him, for he had outlived almost all the friends of

[1] It has now a market value of about £1.

his youth and early manhood; only Crossley remained. Penultimate survivor of all the Fraserians, Ainsworth had seen those talented companions of the famous symposia of "The Thirties" pass away before him; Dickens, Forster, Thackeray, D'Orsay, Lady Blessington, Mrs. Hughes, Barham, Blanchard, Horace Smith, Cruikshank, Lockhart, Sergison, Maclise, and many another valued friend, had long preceded him to the Land of Shadows. Sad, too, in these last days, bereft of health and wealth, to recall the joyous, active time of boyhood; the pleasures of his early years in London and the transient happiness of his youthful marriage; and, above all, the splendid days of fame and hospitality at Kensal Green. Truly only Remembrance was left—

> "Memories that make the heart a tomb,
> Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,
> And with ghastly whisper tell
> That joy, once lost, is pain."

And now also for him the End was nigh, the shadows gathered fast. For some time he had been suffering from senile nerve degeneration, and he failed more and more, sinking gradually away. But none realized that Death was so near, for he preserved his intellect to the last. Here is his final letter, addressed to Dr. J. B. Harrison :—

"REIGATE,
"*December 28th*, 1881.

"MY DEAR JAMES,

"I am very much obliged to you and your amiable daughter for the kind letters I have received from you. I cannot give a very good report of myself, for the fogs with which we have been troubled during the last week have affected me a good deal, and I have been obliged

to call in Dr. Holman,[1] our chief medical man. From my recent experience, I should like very much to pay you another visit, but I fear that cannot be for the present. Nothing could be more fortunate than the date chosen by the worthy Mayor of Manchester. . . . Baron Tauchnitz of Leipzig has just published the two thousandth volume of his charming collection. It contains autographs of all the writers, together with biographical and critical notices by Professor Morley, and is altogether a very attractive work.

"Dr. Holman thought me much wasted since I last saw him, and so I am no doubt.

"Your affectionate cousin,

"W. HARRISON AINSWORTH."

Five days later he died—on January 3rd, 1882—the actual cause of death being congestion of the lungs fatally affecting weak action of the heart. So ended the long life of nearly seventy-seven years—life which had been so full, so eventful, and, on the whole, happy.

According to his often expressed wish, he was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery, in the same vault as his mother and brother. The funeral was very quiet, the body being removed from Reigate by train to London, and thence taken by road to the place of interment. By Northumberland Avenue, Pall Mall, Park Lane, Edgware Road—and then for the last time he passed along the Harrow Road, where, how often, he had walked and ridden and driven in the happy days gone by, a

[1] Sir Constantine Holman, M.D., who was knighted in 1904, died in August, 1910. He was intimately concerned with Epsom Medical College and the British Medical Association, of which he was vice-president. Sir C. Holman informed me that during his professional attendance on Ainsworth, in the latter's last illness, he "found the author pleasantly chatty and inclined to talk of old times."

famous and familiar personality. But on that day in January, 1882, but few knew that the unpretentious funeral procession was the last incident in the career of a man who had, by his works, given pleasure and instruction to untold thousands.

The mourners comprised the widow, Mrs. Ainsworth; Miss Fanny Ainsworth and Mrs. Swanson (daughters); Mr. Swanson (grandson); Dr. W. Francis Ainsworth, Captain W. Ainsworth, Dr. J. B. Harrison, and Mr. H. J. Harrison (cousins); Messrs. R. and F. Routledge (the late author's publishers); Captain Gritton; and Messrs. Joseph Parker, S. Cottam, Sudlow, Hinde, Collier, F. S. Kemp, and Edmund Yates. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. H. C. Johnstone.

James Crossley was prevented by his advanced age (eighty-two) from travelling from Manchester to attend the funeral of his life-long friend, whose loss was a great shock to him. Pathetic for the survivor—the older man—to look back through the vista of years to 1817, to the day when he, a lad of seventeen, formed that firm friendship with the talented, handsome boy of twelve, which was destined to have such notable results in the course of the ensuing sixty-five years. Crossley only survived Ainsworth a year.

. . . . . .

And here, fittingly, at Kensal Green, Ainsworth was laid to rest—almost within sight of the two houses where he dwelt in the days of his brilliant prime; and near him lie Thackeray, Maclise, Tom Hood, Macready, Shirley Brooks, John Leech, and other comrades, who had been his guests in the old times at Kensal Lodge and the Manor House.

The Past is irrevocable, and the noisy, hurrying traffic of the Harrow Road gives no thought to dead and buried people—however famous—who in life met there in more calm and rural days: but for one whose aim has been to present a picture—inadequate it may be and only a phantasmagoria—of a very memorable literary society and a record of its leader's life, the locality and associations of Kensal have ever a deep and abiding interest.

The time has come to say good-bye to "William Harrison Ainsworth and his friends"; and it is with very real regret that this chronicle—the pleasant occupation of several years—is ended.

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2. Sc. 2, ditto.
3. Scene from *Ximenez.*
4. Scenes from Act II of *Venice.*
5. *The Tempest* (poem).
6. *Epigram* (signed T. Hall.)
7. *The Dream. A Sonnet.*
8. *Dramatic Scenes. No. I.*
   (Founded on a story in *Gil Blas.*)
9. *Evening* (poem).
10. *Ghiotto ; or Treason Discovered.*
    A Tragedy in Two Acts.
11. *Recollections of a Veteran.*
12. *Farewell Address,* spoken at the Theatre, Manchester. Signed "W. A. S. W.,[1] King Street, Manchester. Feb. 8."

[1] The "S.W." probably stands for "Samuel Wheeler," one of the juvenile band of Thespians.

13. *Sir Albert's Bride* (poem).
14. *The Dying Laird.*
15. *Song.* Signed "Thos. Hall."
16. *Epistle to J. W. Dalby, Esq.* (In verse.)
17. Translation from Seneca: *Quis Vere Rex?*
18. *Gothamburg Transactions, No.* 5.
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3. *Stanzas.* Signed "T. H., Manchester."
4. *The Spectre Bride* (*The Baron's Bridal*).
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11. *The Lady Sprite.*

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THE EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

(New Series of THE SCOTS MAGAZINE.)

Vol. IX. 1821.

A Letter to the Editor, introducing a scene from *Venice, or the Fall of the Foscaris.*

Vol. X. 1822.

1. *The Emigrants' Return.* } signed θ.
2. Sonnet. }

[1] Possibly J. P. Aston wrote part of Nos. 18 and 19.
[2] Possibly J. P. Aston wrote part of Nos. 8 and 9.

3. Translation from Seneca: *Quis vere Rex?*
4. *London Periodicals.*
5. *What shall I write?* (*The Theatre.*)
6. *Horæ Seniles*: Three parts (*Recollections*), signed "Crito."

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1821. THE EUROPEAN MAGAZINE.

The Baron's Bridal (*The Spectre Bride*).

1822.

1. *A December Tale* (*The Englisher's Story*).
2. *The Imperishable One* (*The Wanderings of an Immortal*).
3. Act I of *Venice, or the Fall of the Foscaris.*
4. *The Test of Affection.*
5. *The Emigrant* (poem).
6. *The Reading Room.*
7. *Snoring.*

1823.

1. *The Half Hangit.*
2. *Coenobium Atticum.*

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1822. THE LONDON MAGAZINE.

The Falls of Ohiopyle.

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1822. THE MANCHESTER IRIS.

The Half Hangit.

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1824. THE BŒOTIAN.

1. *A Tale of Mystery.*
2. *Marian Seaforth of Pine Hollow.*
3. *The Ladies' Bazaar at the Exchange.*
4. Verses on the same.
5. Many shorter pieces, some of which were possibly written by J. P. Aston.

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1825. THE LITERARY SOUVENIR.

1. *The Fortress of Saguntum.* With an illustration.
2. *An Imperfect Portrait* (verses).

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1828. THE CHRISTMAS BOX.

The Fairy and the Peach Tree.

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1828. THE KEEPSAKE.

1. *Dedicatory Stanzas.*
2. *Pocket Books and Keepsakes.*
3. *The Cook and the Doctor* (verses).
4. *Opera Reminiscences for* 1827.
5. *The Ghost Laid.* With an illustration by Stephanoff.

1841.

Beatrice di Tenda (*Michele Orombello*). With an illustration.

1842.

To a Young Italian Lady (verses written in 1823).

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1830. FRASER'S MAGAZINE.

The Wind and the Wave (verses).

1834.

La Guglielmina of Milan.

1835.

1. *St. Augustine and the Boy.*
2. *One Foot in the Stirrup.*

} (verses).

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1835. THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.

A Night's Adventure in Rome. With an illustration by J. Hayter.

1838.

Lines on the Portrait of Mrs. Fairlie.

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1837. BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY.

April Fools (song with music).

1839–40.

Jack Sheppard. With 27 illustrations by George Cruikshank.

1840–1.

Guy Fawkes. With 22 illustrations by George Cruikshank.

1855–7.

The Spendthrift.

1859–60.

1. *The Combat of the Thirty* (poem).
2. *Ovingdean Grange.*
3. *Epilogue* (on "Ouida," etc.).

1861.

The Constable of the Tower. With 6 illustrations by John Gilbert.

1862.
The Lord Mayor of London.

1862–3.
Cardinal Pole.

1863–4.
John Law.

1864–5.
The House of Seven Chimneys (title afterwards changed to *The Spanish Match*).

1865–6.
1. *The Constable de Bourbon.*
2. *Notice of the late Dudley Costello.*

1866–7.
Old Court.

1867–8.
Myddleton Pomfret.

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1841. THE SUNDAY TIMES.
Old St. Paul's.

1848.
The Lancashire Witches.

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1842. AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE.
1. *The Miser's Daughter.* With 20 illustrations on steel and 3 on wood by George Cruikshank.
2. *Strawberry Hill.* With woodcuts by W. A. Delamotte.

1842–3.
Windsor Castle. With 18 illustrations on steel by Tony Johannot and George Cruikshank, and 87 on wood and 3 plans by W. A. Delamotte.

1843.

Modern Chivalry; or a New Orlando Furioso (in collaboration with Mrs. Gore). With 5 illustrations on steel and 1 on wood by George Cruikshank.

1844.

1. *Saint James's; or the Court of Queen Anne.* With 14 illustrations by George Cruikshank.
2. Reviews of *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *A Christmas Carol.*
3. Review of *Leigh Hunt's Poems.*
4. *British Archæologists at Canterbury.*
5. Review of Works by G. P. R. James.
6. *Revelations of London* (*Auriol*), as far as Book II, Chapter III. With illustrations by "Phiz."

1845.

1. *The Archæological Association.*
2. *The Archæological Association* and *The Athenæum.*
3. *The late Mr. Laman Blanchard.*
4. *The D'Orsay Gallery.*

1847.

James the Second. With 11 illustrations by R. W. Buss.

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1821. THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

On the Writings of Richard Clitheroe.

1845.

Cecco del Orso.

1845–6.

Revelations of London (*Auriol*). Reprinted and concluded. With illustrations by "Phiz."

1846.

Laman Blanchard's Letters.

1847.

1. *Memoir of Charles Hooten.*
2. *The British Archæological Association in Warwickshire.*

1851.

Remarks on Anglo-French Entente.

1852.

Reviews of Currer Bell's Works and of Thackeray's *Esmond.*

1853–4.

The Flitch of Bacon.

1854.

Prologue to the Hundredth Volume.

1869.

Hilary St. Ives.

1872.

Boscobel, a Tale of the Year 1651. With all the illustrations by J. H. Rimbault, Frederick Manning, Captain J. H. L. Archer, etc. Five of these were not reproduced in the book editions.

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1853. THE HOME COMPANION.

The Star Chamber. With illustrations by George Measom.

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1868. BOW BELLS.

The South Sea Bubble. With 20 illustrations by E. H. Corbould.

1870.

Talbot Harland. With 14 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

1871.

Tower Hill. With 12 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

1874.

1. *Merry England.* With 16 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.
2. *The Goldsmith's Wife.* With 13 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

1876.

Chetwynd Calverley. With 15 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

1877–8.

The Fall of Somerset. With 15 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

1878.

Beatrice Tyldesley. With 15 illustrations by Frederick Gilbert.

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April, 1876. THE MANCHESTER COURIER.

Memoir of Thomas Gilbert Ainsworth.

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1881. THE BOLTON WEEKLY JOURNAL.

Stanley Brereton.

II. CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS.

The Old London Merchant (*Sir Lionel Flamstead*), with an illustration by George Cruikshank, appeared in

The Pic-Nic Papers,

By various hands, edited by Charles Dickens.

3 volumes.

London : Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.

1841.

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The Astrologer, with an illustration by George Cattermole, appeared in

Evenings at Haddon Hall,

Edited by the Baroness de Calabrella.
London: Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.
1846.

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Memoir of Thomas Gilbert Ainsworth, for *The Manchester Grammar School Register.*
1871.

III. PUBLISHED WORKS.

Poems.
By Cheviot Ticheburn.
London: John Arliss, Gutter Lane.
1822.

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Monody on the Death of John Philip Kemble.
Manchester: John Leigh.
1823.
(8vo, pp. 6 and 2.)

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December Tales.
London: G. and B. W. Whitaker, Ave Maria Lane.
1823.

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The Bœotian.
Manchester: Thos. Sowler, St. Ann's Square.
1824.

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The Works of Cheviot Tichburn,
with the types of John Leigh.
(Manchester) 1825.
Contained 32 poems.

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Letters from Cockney Lands.
London : John Ebers, 27 Old Bond Street.
1826.
(12mo, pp. 93.)

2nd Edition.
Printed for W. Sams, Royal Library,
1 St. James's Street, London.
1827.

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Considerations on the best means of affording Immediate Relief to the Operative Classes in the Manufacturing Districts.
By William H. Ainsworth.
London : John Ebers, Old Bond Street.
1826.
(Price 1/6. Printed by S. and R. Bentley, Dorset Street.)

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Sir John Chiverton,
A Romance.
London : John Ebers, Old Bond Street.
1826.
(Price 10/6.)

2nd Edition was published by W. H. Ainsworth,
London, 1827.
(This romance was written in collaboration with John Partington Aston.)

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Rookwood ;
A Romance.
London : Richard Bentley, 8, New Burlington Street.
(29th April, 1834. 3 vols.)

2nd Edition.

Rookwood.
A Romance.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth.
Second Edition.
In Three Volumes.
London : Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.
(Successor to Henry Colburn)
1834 (13th August).
(3 vols., 31/6.)

3rd Edition.

Rookwood.
A Romance.
By W. H. Ainsworth.
London : John Macrone, 3, St. James's Square.
1835.

4th Edition.

Rookwood.
A Romance.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth.
The Fourth Edition complete in one volume.
With (twelve) illustrations by Geo. Cruikshank (and portrait of Ainsworth, by Maclise, engraved by Edwards).
London : John Macrone, 3, St. James's Square.
1836.

(Covers sometimes green, but generally marone.)

5th Edition. No. 60 of Bentley's Standard Novels.

Rookwood.

A Romance.

By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.

Revised, corrected, and illustrated with a new Preface, and Notes, by the Author.

London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.

1837.

With two illustrations by J. Cawse, engraved by W. Greatbatch; and a Dedicatory Letter to the author's mother, Mrs. Ainsworth.

Turpin's Ride to York.

Six Engravings by Edward Hull, Illustrating *Rookwood.*

London: Colnaghi & Co., Cockspur Street.

1834–5.

Twelve Illustrations to Wm. Harrison Ainsworth's Celebrated Romance of Rookwood,

the etchings by George Cruikshank.

1836

(issued in a wrapper).

Foreign Editions:

1. *Les Gentilshommes de Grand Chemin.*

Paris, 1836.

2. *Rookwood.*

Deutch von O. L. B. Wolff.

Leipzig, 1837.

New English Edition, in one volume.
Rookwood.
etc.
Illustrated with 12 etchings by George Cruikshank, and a portrait of Ainsworth by Maclise.
London : Chapman and Hall.
1851.

Edition with new illustrations.
Rookwood . . .
(With 8 illustrations by John Gilbert.)
London : Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1857.
With Laman Blanchard's *Memoir of Ainsworth.*

Rookwood . . .
" The Original Illustrated Edition," 1875, issued by Routledge, contained all the illustrations by George Cruikshank and John Gilbert.

Other editions by Routledge in 1853, 1878, 1884, 1891, 1892, etc., and one by Greening & Co. in 1904.

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Crichton.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
Author of *Rookwood.*
In Three Volumes.
London : Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.
1837.

2nd Edition, in one volume.

Crichton.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq. . . .
Paris : A. and W. Galignani & Co., No. 18 Rue Vivienne.
1837.

Tableaux from
Crichton.
A Romance.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
Designed and etched
By John Franklin, Esq.
London : John Macrone, St. James's Square.
1837.
(Twelve Plates, with descriptive letterpress, in folio volume.)

3rd, and 1st Illustrated, Edition.
Crichton . . .
etc.
with 18 Plates by " Phiz."
London : Chapman and Hall.
1849.

4th Edition, 1853.

5th Edition, Routledge's Railway Library, 1854.

Crichton.
Roman traduit par A. Rolet.
Paris, 1858.
Bibliothèque des meilleurs romans étrangers.

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Jack Sheppard.
A Romance.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
Author of *Rookwood* and *Crichton.*
With illustrations by George Cruikshank.
In Three Volumes.
London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.
1839.

It contains 27 etchings and 2 woodcuts by Cruikshank, and a portrait of Ainsworth by R. J. Lane, and is the only edition which gives the music of the ballad *St. Giles' Bowl*, Epoch I, Chap. 5. The covers are dark green.

Jack Sheppard.

In 15 monthly parts, with Cruikshank's 27 illustrations on steel and a cover design of " Jack carving his name on the beam."

Issued by Bentley, 1840–1. (Very rare.)

2nd Edition, Bentley, 1840. Calf covers.

Edition in one volume, G. Routledge & Co., 1854. (With all the illustrations on steel by Cruikshank.)

Other editions by Routledge in 1856, 1862, 1865, 1884, 1891, 1893, 1903, etc.

Jack Sheppard was also issued in 44 penny weekly parts, illustrated by Cruikshank.

London : Henry Vickers, Angel Court, Strand.
1858.

Jack Sheppard,
or *Les Chevaliers du Brouillard.*
Roman traduit de l'Anglais,
2 Tomes.
Paris : Libraire Hachette et Cie.
1873.

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The Tower of London.
A Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by George Cruikshank.
London : Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.

It was issued in 13 monthly parts (12 and 13 forming a double number) from January to December, 1840, and contained 40 etchings and 58 woodcuts by Cruikshank.

1st Edition, in one volume.

The Tower of London.
A Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by George Cruikshank.
London : Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.
1840.

It contained all the illustrations, and the brown cloth cover had pictorial designs by Cruikshank.

2nd Edition, with all the illustrations,
Bentley, January, 1842.

3rd Edition. The same, but published by
Hugh Cunningham,
St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square.
April, 1842.

4th Edition, 1844.

5th Edition, 1845.

6th Edition, 1853, Routledge.

The plates for this edition were retouched, concerning which Cruikshank wrote :—

" The etchings all spoilt by being re-bit by a stranger, instead of being done, as they ought to have been, by Geo. Cruikshank."

The Tower of London.

Issued in weekly penny numbers (or 5 parts with wrapper at 6*d.*) with all the illustrations by Cruikshank. London : George Vickers, Holywell Street.

These parts, bound together, formed a new edition of the work, published by Geo. Routledge & Co., 1854.

The weekly numbers were reissued again, by Henry Vickers, Angel Court, Strand, in 1858–9.

American Edition.
Routledge, 18, Beekman Street, New York.
In pictorial paper wrappers, price 50 cents.
" Inscribed to the Memory of Thomas Ainsworth, Esq., of Beech Hill, near Manchester,
By his son."

Foreign Editions :—

De Tower de London, 1841.

Het Kasteel of London, 1843.

La Torre de Londres, Barcelona, 1844.

La Tour de Londres, Hachette, Paris, 1858. Translated by Edouard Scheffter.

English Editions by Routledge, 1878, 1882, 1891, etc.
,, ,, Cassell, 1884, 1890.
,, ,, Methuen, 1903.
,, ,, Henry Frowde, 1904.

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Guy Fawkes ;
or The Gunpowder Treason.
An Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth. . . .
With (22) Illustrations by George Cruikshank.

In Three Volumes.
London : Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street.
1841.
(Red-brown covers.)

Edition in one volume.
Same title-page, as above, to " Cruikshank."
London : Geo. Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street,
1857.
Other editions by Routledge, 1878, 1884, 1891, etc.

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Old St. Paul's ;
A Tale of the Plague and the Fire.
By William Harrison Ainsworth. . . .
With (20) Illustrations by John Franklin.
In Three Volumes.
London : Hugh Cunningham, Saint Martin's Place,
Trafalgar Square.
1841.

Old St. Paul's
was issued by Hugh Cunningham in 12 monthly parts, 1842–3, with all Franklin's illustrations and the cover design by Cruikshank (originally drawn for *The Lions of London*, 1836).

Edition in one volume, with two new illustrations.
Old St. Paul's,
etc.
With 20 Illustrations by John Franklin ;
and frontispiece and vignette by " Phiz."
London : Parry, Blenkarn & Co., Leadenhall Street.
1847.
(Pictorial cloth covers.)

Routledge's edition, 1855, has the same plates; pictorial red-cloth covers.

Other editions by Routledge, 1857, 1884, 1891, etc.

Continental Edition.

Pest en Brand of London, 1843.

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The Miser's Daughter.

A Tale.

By William Harrison Ainsworth. . . .

With illustrations (20) by George Cruikshank.

In Three Volumes.

London: Cunningham and Mortimer, Adelaide Street, Trafalgar Square.

1842.

(Dark green covers.)

2nd Edition, as above, 1843.

3rd Edition, and 1st in one volume, with all the illustrations and portrait of Ainsworth, 1848.

Editions by Routledge, 1855, 1879, 1886, 1892, etc.

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Windsor Castle.

An Historical Romance.

By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.

In Three Volumes.

London: Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.

1843.

It contained only three of Cruikshank's illustrations, as frontispieces:—

1. Henry's reconciliation with Anne Boleyn.
2. Dismissal of Cardinal Wolsey.
3. Herne flying into the burning woods.

2nd Edition, and 1st in one volume.

Windsor Castle.

An Historial Romance.

By William Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.

New Edition illustrated by George Cruikshank and Tony Johannot, with designs on wood by

W. Alfred Delamotte.

London: Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.

1843.

It contained 14 steel etchings by Cruikshank and 4 by Johannot; 87 woodcuts and 3 plans by Delamotte; woodcut title by Johannot; and a portrait of Ainsworth by Maclise.

Pictorial blue cloth covers; later issues red.

In 1843–4 Henry Colburn also issued *Windsor Castle* in 11 monthly parts, with all the illustrations as above. It is very rare in parts. The type may have been used for Colburn's next royal 8vo edition, 1844.

Editions by Routledge, 1853, 1878, 1884, 1891, 1894, etc.

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Modern Chivalry;

or a New Orlando Furioso.

With (6) illustrations by George Cruikshank.

London: John Mortimer, Adelaide Street, Trafalgar Square.

1843.

(Two volumes.)

This work was written in collaboration with Mrs. C. F. Gore, or "edited" by Ainsworth.

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Saint James's ;
or the Court of Queen Anne.
An Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth, Esq. . . .
With (9) illustrations by George Cruikshank.
London : John Mortimer, Adelaide Street,
Trafalgar Square.
1844.
(Three volumes.)

2nd Edition, 1846, with same illustrations.
Editions by Routledge, 1853, 1879, 1889.

French Edition.
Abigail ; ou la Cour de la Reine Anne.
Roman historique traduit par B. H. Révoil.
Paris, 1858.

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Auriol.

Though issued in *Ainsworth's Magazine* and *The New Monthly Magazine* in 1844–6, this work, apparently, was not published in book form until about 1865 :—

Auriol, or the Elixir of Life
(together with *The Old London Merchant*, and *A Night's Adventure in Rome*).
By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq. . . .
London : George Routledge & Sons, Ludgate Hill.

Routledge's " Original Illustrated Edition," 1875, also contains the 15 illustrations to *Auriol* drawn by " Phiz." The other two items are unillustrated in Routledge's editions.

Other Editions in 1881, 1890, 1892.

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James the Second;
or the Revolution of 1688.
An Historical Romance.
Edited by W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
In Three Volumes.
London: Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.
1848.

It contained 3 of R. W. Buss's illustrations as frontispieces.

In subsequent editions the word "edited" disappears from the title pages.

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The Lancashire Witches.
A Novel.
By William Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
London.
Printed for Private Circulation only.
1849.

(Folio; pages of two columns, printed from type used in *The Sunday Times*.)

First Published Edition.
The Lancashire Witches.
A Romance of Pendle Forest.
By William Harrison Ainsworth, Esq. . . .
In Three Volumes.
(The author reserves to himself the right of issuing a German translation in Prussia.)
London: Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street.
1849.

First Illustrated Edition, with 12 plates by John Gilbert.
London: George Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1854.

Other Editions by Routledge, 1854, 1878, 1884, etc.

The Lancashire Witches.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
With 6 illustrations by Paul Hardy.
London: John Dicks.

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The Life and Adventures of Mervyn Clitheroe.
By W. Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by "Phiz."
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1851.

The First Part appeared in 4 monthly numbers, December, 1851, to March, 1852, in pale yellow covers designed by "Phiz." The 5th number did not appear till December, 1857, and the tale concluded with the 12th number in June, 1858. Nos. 5 to 12 were published by Routledge, and the covers were blue with the same designs as the earlier ones.

First Book Edition.
Mervyn Clitheroe.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by Hablot K. Browne.
London: George Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1858.
(24 Plates by H. K. Browne.)
Another edition 1890.

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The Star Chamber.
An Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Author of *The Tower of London*, etc. . . .
In Two Volumes.
London: G. Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1854.

2nd, and 1st illustrated, edition ; one volume.
With 8 full page plates by " Phiz."
Routledge, 1857.

Other editions by Routledge, 1861, 1879, 1889, 1892, etc.

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The Flitch of Bacon,
or The Custom of Dunmow.
A Tale of English Home.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
With (8) illustrations by John Gilbert.
London : Geo. Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1854.
(Pictorial cover in red cloth.)

4th Edition appeared in 1855, Routledge.

Other Editions by Routledge, 1874, 1879, 1889, 1892, etc.

Continental Edition.

Dunmow's Huwelykstrouw, 1855.

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Ballads :
Romantic, Fantastical, and Humorous.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by John Gilbert.
London : G. Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1855.

(Contained 82 ballads and 8 plates. Green pictorial cloth covers.)

2nd Edition, Routledge, 1872, with *The Combat of the Thirty* added ; and *Memoir of Ainsworth,* by James Crossley.

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The Spendthrift:
A Tale.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
With (8) illustrations by Hablot K. Browne.
London: George Routledge & Co., Farringdon Street.
1857.
(Red pictorial cloth covers.)
Other Editions in 1879, 1889, 1892, etc.

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The Combat of the Thirty.
From a Breton Lay of the Fourteenth Century.
With an introduction, comprising a
new chapter of Froissart.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
MDCCCLIX
Price one shilling.
(Glazed cardboard covers.)

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Ovingdean Grange.
A Tale of the South Downs.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by Hablot K. Browne.
London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, Farringdon Street; and 56, Walker Street, New York.
1860.
(Eight plates; pictorial blue cloth covers.)
Other Editions in 1879, 1891, etc.

Views of the Devil's Dyke.
The Legend of which is derived by permission from

Ovingdean Grange, By W. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq.
1862.
(4 views.)

Another Edition issued by J. Beal & Co., Brighton, 1876 (pp. 8).

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The Constable of the Tower.
An Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
Illustrated by John Gilbert.
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
MDCCCLXI.
(6 Plates. Scarlet covers.)

2nd Illustrated Edition, one volume, with 4 plates by Gilbert.
G. Routledge & Sons, 1880.

Another Edition in 1906, Routledge.

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The Lord Mayor of London:
or City Life in the Last Century.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1862.
(Mauve cloth covers with civic arms.)

Illustrated Edition, in one volume, with 4 plates by Frederick Gilbert.
G. Routledge & Sons, 1880.

Another Edition, 1906, Routledge.

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Cardinal Pole:
or The Days of Philip and Mary.
An Historical Romance.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1863.
(Brown covers.)

Illustrated Edition, in one volume, with 4 plates by Frederick Gilbert.
G. Routledge & Sons, 1880.

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John Law,
The Projector.
By William Harrison Ainsworth.
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1864.
(Brown covers.)

Illustrated Edition, in one volume, with 4 plates by Frederick Gilbert.
G. Routledge & Sons, 1881.

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The Spanish Match,
or Charles Stuart at Madrid.
By William Harrison Ainsworth. . . .
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1865.
(Violet covers.)

Illustrated Edition, in one volume, with 4 plates by Frederick Gilbert.
G. Routledge and Sons, 1880.

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The Constable de Bourbon.
By William Harrison Ainsworth. . . .
In Three Volumes.
London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly.
1866.
(Marone covers.)

Illustrated Edition, in one volume, with 4 plates by Frederick Gilbert.
G. Routledge and Sons, 1880.

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Old Court.
A Novel.
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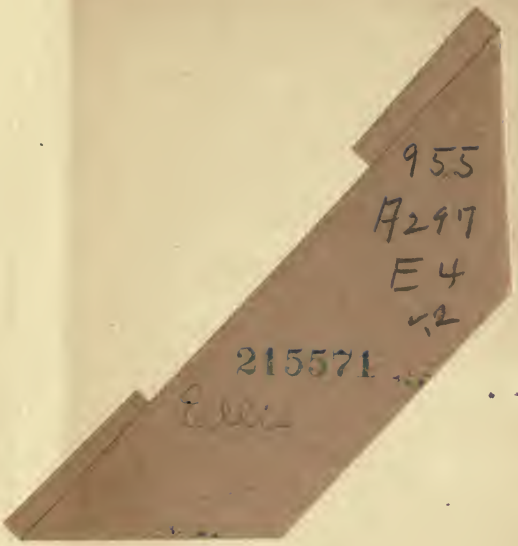
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